

Our names are Trevor, Emily, and Collin Furay, the Children of Heather Melby, and Christopher and Jensen Melby, the children of Scott Melby. Together, we are writing this letter to share a story of our parents, Scott and Heather Melby, and the recent tragedy that has occurred in their lives.

In 2004 our parents were next-door neighbors that happen to both be going through a divorce with an alcoholic spouse. By 2006, they were engaged to be married after having leaned on each other through this difficult time which resulted in an unbreakable emotional connection. It's a story line that sounds like it would have occurred in a movie or a book, except it didn't. At least not yet.

The next 15 years as a blended family was spent moving from one place to another: 2 apartments, 3 manufactured homes, and 2 rental homes all spread between Livingston and Genesee Counties. We never stayed in a living space for more than a couple years. We call it a living space because we were never there long enough to call it a home.

Throughout the years, while raising 5 children of their own, they took in children that weren't theirs and treated them like their own. They displayed unwavering selflessness through their acts of community service helping the elderly and others in need. They gave when they had nothing to give. They supported others when they themselves were the ones who needed support. They were individuals you would be proud to call a member of your community, even if they weren't going to be staying long.

None of this was done with ease, either. All along the way, Heather was dealing with debilitating health issues including fibromyalgia, disc degenerative disease, PTSD, chronic asthma and the list goes on. Some days she could barely move to get out of bed, but she never quit fighting. All the while doing things like housing children with parents in active addiction, taking care of the yard work and home duties of neighbors and community members suffering from cancer and other life altering situations, and constantly putting other people and their problems and hardships above her own.

In 2020, they purchased the historic farmhouse they thought would be their forever home. They lived in this home longer than any other place in the last two decades. They loved this home and had absolutely no intentions of ever leaving, or even considering it.

On the afternoon of Wednesday, September 18th, those plans of forever in their beloved historic farmhouse were charred with flames, drenched with 5,000 gallons of water, and covered up in thick gray smoke. By Wednesday night, they were leaving the home that they prayed about for 15 years with nothing but the clothes on their backs.

The home is being looked at as a total loss. Everything is damaged in one way or another. Whether it was burnt to ashes, water logged from putting out the fire, or discolored and reek of fire from the smoke, everything is damaged.

Their home is located in the small Village of Gaines. When something is happening within the village, the entire village knows. Many members of their small community showed up in support, uttering things like "I can't believe this is happening to Scott and Heather", "Of all people: Scott and Heather", "Why them?"

With years and years of selfless service to the many communities they've been apart of, it is our hope the community will support them with prayers and donations to help rebuild their life that is currently in ashes.

Thank you from the bottom of our hearts,

Trevor, Emily, Collin, Christopher, & Jensen
(The children of Scott & Heather Melby)

<https://gofund.me/9033c104>