



Dr. Huali Li

January 12, 1945 - February 24, 2021

Dr. Huali Li, 76, of Bellingham, WA, passed away peacefully on February 24, 2021 at Peace Health St. Joseph Medical Center after a long, courageous battle with lung cancer.

Huali was born on January 12, 1945 in Shanghai, China. The youngest of three kids, he was adored by his sister, brother and parents growing up. After graduating high school, he studied at Fudan University in Shanghai, one of the most prestigious educational institutions in China. His 20's were hard and difficult years spent surviving the cultural revolution.

In his own words (he left a letter for me to read after his passing) –

Although I took the right steps possible in my early life, the future looked bleak in my mid-twenties. The only bright spot was meeting your mother. In 1974, we got married. Then we had you.

I never thought we would have settled down in Canada and the States. It's not easy for me to come this far, yet I am very happy I made it. Most importantly, you, Kaléa and Hazel will never need to go through what I had to.

Huali moved to Canada to pursue a PhD in 1982. Life was tough in the mid 80's, but my parents always persevered no matter how hard it was – because

they wanted a better life for me. In Shanghai, we were in a prestigious part of the city and had a lot of family around, but in Canada we lived off the meager salary Dad made as a teacher's assistant and I shared a room with my parents for many years.

After graduating in 1988 with his PhD from Simon Fraser University, Huali built his career as a scientist – including 4 years at QLT – a biotechnology company that (ironically) has a history of developing treatments for cancer – and then Bayer in their Animal Health division from 1998 until his retirement in 2013.

Despite all the hardships he endured, my Dad was outgoing, cheerful and extremely friendly. He loved chatting people up wherever he went. He was very athletic – he was the captain and setter of the Chemistry department volleyball team in University and he often played badminton. He enjoyed watching NCAA basketball – Dad was an enthusiastic fan of the University of Kansas Jayhawks. Dad was also an avid reader – he read voraciously. His colleagues and friends all admired and respected his knowledge. Though he was small in stature, he was the strongest and most determined man I know. A man who fought every day for his family, a man who started with \$50 in his pocket when he landed in Canada, built a stable and secure life for his wife and child, and spent his final days in his dream home in Sudden Valley.

One of my earliest memories is from when I was still sleeping in a crib. I remember waking up one morning and seeing my parents in bed and looking at me. I climbed out of my crib and squeezed in between them, and this became something I'd always do upon waking. China in those days did not have central heating (or any heating at all). Mom said during the winter months, Dad would give me the bed to sleep with Mom and he would sleep on the couch because the bed was warmer. He always put us first.

Chinese families aren't that physically affectionate – growing up, there were no kisses or hugs that I can remember. However, my dad showed affection by resting his forehead against mine or he would come close to my face and lovingly smooth out the wrinkle between my eyebrows.

I love how much he cared about our family. He sacrificed everything – he was frugal and bought little for himself – and in the end, he wasn't scared or worried for himself. His only concern was for my Mom, me and his grandkids.

Kaléa and Hazel lit up his heart and brought him so much joy. I will be eternally grateful for the memories of seeing him and Mom weekly while they spent time with our girls. They drove up weekly from Bellingham to look after their grandbabies while Daniel and I went to work. Those times were so special to him. He saw the girls a few days before he passed away and Mom said he was happy all day. We had never seen him so energetic and excited – despite the late stage cancer.

Baba – we butted heads a lot, but this was because we were so alike. I inherited your impatience, your stubbornness and your love for food (especially Mom's cooking). You were also a romantic at heart – you proclaimed that the best thing that ever happened to you was meeting and marrying Mom. I came to you for everything and I loved hearing your advice on life. I always took it to heart. There are no words to express the hole that is left in our lives now that you're gone.

You are deeply missed by your brother and sister in Shanghai and Beijing, your daughter Rosemary, your son-in law Daniel, your granddaughters Kaléa and Hazel, and above all, by Mom – Yirong, your wife whom you loved beyond words.

I see you now, with your red backpack on, walking slowly and confidently toward the lights. Someday, I'll feel your forehead against mine again, and your gentle hands smoothing away the furrow on my brow. Until then, Baba, we will remember you and hold you in our hearts.

With love always,

Weiwen

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to the Seattle Cancer Care Alliance. They provided amazing care and support to my Dad during his battle with cancer.

Tribute Wall

ST

“ We want to extend our deepest condolences to you, your mother and family

Stephen Tsou - March 17, 2021 at 12:00 AM

SC

“ He was an amazing man. An will always be remembered and in our hearts.
Beautiful obituary. Sending love to you and your family.

Spencer Chisholm - March 17, 2021 at 12:00 AM

CC

“ Well wrote obituary. Love you all and I will miss your father.

Cameron Chisholm - March 16, 2021 at 12:00 AM