

My sugar skull and mask are in memory of my cousin, Lenny. He was one of the bravest, funniest, and strongest people I have ever met. Diagnosed with brain cancer at 11, he fought bravely for three years. I was ten when he passed away, and I will never forget the day my parents told me he wasn't going to make it. His cancer had come back suddenly; it was unexpected, and I was devastated. At the time, I had no idea just how serious cancer was. I didn't think it was possible that he wouldn't make it. But I will never forget him.

I decided to create my sugar skull for Lenny because he is my hero. I've always looked up to him, especially when I was younger. When I was little, I used to follow him everywhere. We would go trick-or-treating together, play video games, and every Thanksgiving at my house we would hang out downstairs. While the adults were talking, we would play with stuffed animals or use the computer to play line-rider. Lenny and I were very close. Even the stickers on my laptop are from a game he introduced me to. Seeing him go through cancer was very difficult for my family and I; I still remember going to visit him in the hospital. He has changed my life in so many ways, and taught me to never give up, no matter what.

I kept Lenny in mind as I created my skull and mask. I used blue and green as the main colors for both, since those are the Lenny's Friends with Wings charity colors. The charity was formed by my aunt and uncle, and I've been a big part of it since it began. I also added a dragonfly made from the pipe cleaners to both, since dragonflies are the charity's symbol. My aunt and uncle felt he would have preferred them over butterflies.

On the mask, I added two stickers: a dog and a racecar. The dog sticker is for his dog, Buddy, who recently passed away last month. A paw print sticker was also added to the back of the skull in memory of him. The racecar sticker is from the box of Lenny's toy cars that were passed down to my brother; I also played with them. It reminds me of all the games and toys we used to play with, many of which I now own.

For the skull, along with using a blue and green palette, I also added blue and green feathers atop the head. I attempted to paint a green dragonfly on the head, however the paint was not as visible as I would have liked; this gave me the idea for the second pipe cleaner dragonfly. I left one eye socket intentionally blank, except for some glitter, because I felt two googly eyes looked a bit creepy. To further minimize any creepiness, I added a white, splotch-shaped glitter piece to the skull's left eye. It reminds me of a pattern a dog would have on their fur, which made me think of Buddy. In the end, the skull looks a bit goofy, but I think if Lenny saw it he would have laughed.

Día de los Muertos has really opened up my mind to celebrating the passing of loved ones. I enjoyed creating a skull and mask in memory of my cousin, and I thought about them

throughout the whole process. Though they are gone, it is good to remember the time we spent together. I have never written something about them like this; I feel that it has removed a weight from my chest. I now understand why it Día de los Muertos so widely celebrated. It may be a bit sad to think of those you've lost, but I would not call it a sad holiday. Día de los Muertos is a celebration for passed loved ones, honoring the people who we will never forget.

Panegírico:

Yo soy Alyssa Straface de East Falls. Yo vivo en un tranquilo calle. Me gusta dibujar y leer. Yo sonrío mucho. Pero yo llevo puesto estos pulseras todos los días. Los pulseras son en memoria de Lenny.

Lenny fue de Nueva Jersey. Su familia fue de Nueva Jersey también. Él fue mi mayor primo. Él fue un estudiante en Stella Maris escuela en Philadelphia. Él fue un Acuario de zodiaco. Lenny tuvo un perro, Buddy, y un hermana, Christina. Él fue cómico, fuerte, y valiente. Lenny fue moreno y llevó espejuelos. Él es mi héroe.

Yo estoy en Philadelphia. Yo vivo cerca de Nueva Jersey. Yo suelo visitar Lenny en el hospital. Yo estoy un poquito triste recuerdo. Pero yo estoy contenta recuerdo también. Yo recuerdo el bueno memorias. El memorias hago mi sonrío.

En conclusión, Lenny es mi héroe y yo olvido lo nunca. Yo tengo muchos cariñosa memorias de nos. Lenny cambió mi vida. Yo espero que su historia cambió tu vida también.

En Memoria de Lenny vídeo: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DY0Fzo_vwVU

