

April 20, 2025

Testimony in Favor of SB1032

My name is Kim Braasch and I am in favor of SB1032, a law that would require sellers of Diflouroethane (DFE), like Duster keyboard cleaners, to store it behind the counter with other potentially harmful products. My 26 year old niece, Joleen Sarah Braasch-Berry, was struck and killed by a 25 year old man who had, just minutes earlier, purchased and inhaled from a can of Duster keyboard cleaner. The young man is in prison and my niece died a violent death.



Joleen was an exceptional child and woman by any standards. She achieved at the highest level throughout public school and university, all A's, all the time. She earned a full ride Ford scholarship to any university. She had just married in August the man she called her best friend and by the 10th of October she was killed by a young man her own age who had, five minutes earlier, abused Duster in a Home Depot parking lot and then passed out while driving his girlfriend's car past Joleen on her bicycle. Photo is from the Home Depot security camera.



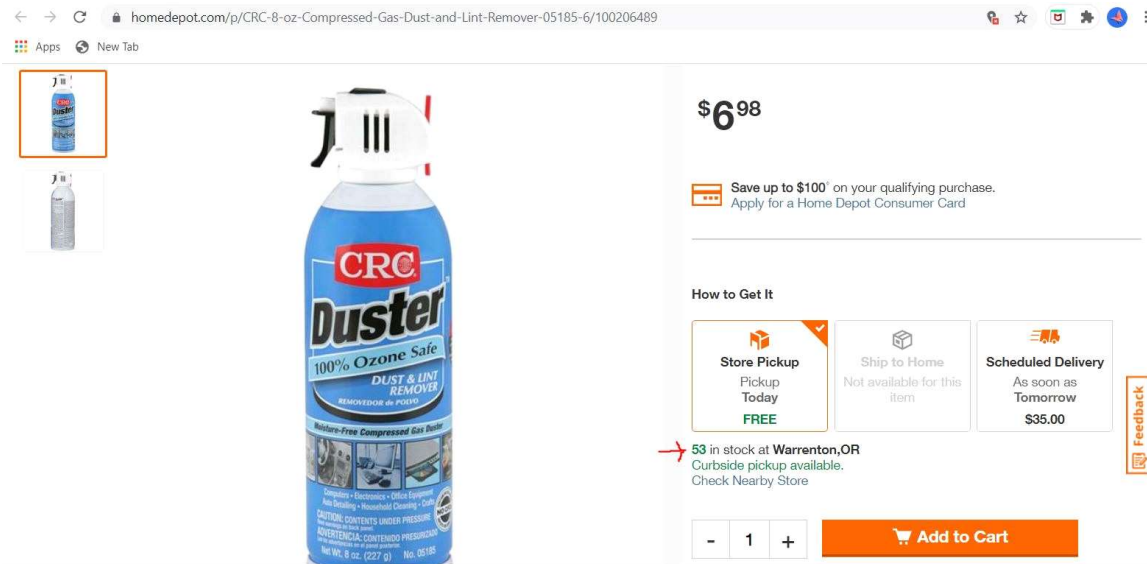
With three teenage siblings and a working, single mother, I was amazed and impressed when I saw ten year old Joleen doing homework in the corner of a crowded apartment while noisy family drama went on around her. Joleen and I were close, I was her confidante, mentor and friend. She sent me many cards and letters all her life, with drawings, collages, poetry and folded paper crafts, anything to show she cared. We went on an epic backpack and climbing expedition with the Salem Chemeketan's Outdoor Club when she was 10 years old.

Joleen had a beautiful voice and was encouraged by her choir instructors and many friends to pursue a singing career. She decided against it because she didn't want to compete or profit from singing, but rather just share and enjoy singing. She was wise beyond her years. As the picture below shows, she was dearly loved at the Book Bin where she was a lively spirit among introverted coworkers. At her memorial, they, like others from her grade school, junior high, high school, Western Oregon University, Cherry City Roller Derby and Weddle Elementary, emphasized how she had reached out to them and changed their lives with her caring involvement with them, full of warmth, sincerity and vivacity.



Joleen's widower, George, and mother, Tammy, in front of Salem Book Bin memorial to Joleen.

When I heard from my sister what had happened to her daughter, how a Duster keyboard cleaner had caused the driver of a car to pass out and hit her and kill her, I can't find words to say how I felt. She had been riding her bike home south on Cherry Avenue, up the hill from Home Depot, from a full day at Weddle Elementary School. She used her tech skills in the library and for helping youngsters and their families set up their computers at home during Covid. I immediately investigated the Duster scene online and discovered that in Warrenton, a small coastal town near me, there were over 50 cans of Duster in stock. Many more than required for local keyboard cleaning! I also learned of Families Against Inhalent Abuse and realized Duster death is a nationwide tragedy unfolding constantly.



Had there been the law we propose when Joleen bicycled in Salem that day, she would have made it home. Please enact SB1032 as law to prevent some of Duster's future tragedies.

Sincerely,

Kim Braasch