

Melinda (Okland) Austin In Memoriam



If you read any of the articles in our last 16 GeoNews newsletters, you were witness to the masterful graphic design work of Melinda Austin. Mindy began working for the Department of Mineral Resources - Geological Survey eight years ago (October 2013) as an Administrative Assistant II. Her many duties included the layout and design of the DMR newsletter. We greatly benefited from her previous work experience as a graphic designer for several printing companies. In addition to the graphic design work, that experience aided her in the proofing of blueslines and the interaction with various printing companies. Mindy also designed and oversaw the publication of more than 100 Geological Survey reports. For a time, she was the main point of contact for our popular public fossil dig program and in between publication jobs she digitally scanned and PhotoShopped more than 30,000 of our 35 mm slides.

If you had asked me two years ago to describe Mindy, I would have used words like competent, efficient, hardworking, and dependable. Today, in addition to those same words I would add courageous. For the past 15 months, Mindy has been battling an illness and working from home due to her suppressed immune system. During that time, she still managed to design and set up the last two newsletters and over 25 Survey publications. For this newsletter, Mindy set up four of the articles before her condition worsened and she had to go into the hospital. During our last conversation, Mindy asked about the status of the newsletter and wanted to make sure that Trudi Hogue received credit for finishing the newsletter – Trudi is credited on the inside cover alongside Mindy.

Mindy passed away on December 28, 2021. To say she will be missed by our DMR family is a huge understatement.

