

Courtney Marie Long
November 11, 1983 – March 8, 2019

Courtney Marie Long, aged 35, passed away on March 8, 2019. She was born on November 11, 1983, and lived in Austin where she attended elementary and middle school and then Westlake High School, graduating in 2004.

Born with cerebral palsy, Courtney would never talk or walk. But her disabilities didn't keep her from enjoying her life to the fullest. She had the best smile and lit up the room with her happiness, making it impossible for those around her not to be happy. We knew she was intelligent and had a great memory and sense of humor, and from her we learned to take joy in the little things and to be more humble, giving, and accepting of others.

Courtney loved to people-watch and never forgot a face. She insisted upon watching the same movie over and over again until everyone in the family could say all the words and sing all the songs. Because she particularly loved movie musicals, she attended live performances of many of her favorites such as *Phantom of the Opera*, *Cats*, *Mary Poppins*, and *Wicked*. Her love of watching certain TV shows and movies led to an abiding interest in actor Dennis Quaid whom she met 5 times at golf tournaments, even having a picture of her with him published in *Golf Digest* and a live television spot with him at one of the tournaments.

Courtney's greatest enjoyment was getting out and going shopping, especially in Salado where store and restaurant owners knew her by name and treated her with special care, giving her treats such as extra-large ice cream sundaes that she would eat every bite of. When it was time to leave, she would cry. She also loved trips to the mall with her attendant Mandi to shop, hang out, and watch people.

Not only did Mandi take Courtney to the mall, she also arranged for Courtney to volunteer at the Austin Humane Society as a "Kitty Socializer." The cats loved climbing all over her wheelchair and sitting in her lap. And Mandi often took Courtney and some of her friends bowling. Courtney got a kick out of making a strike and usually scored the highest. Over the years her family took her traveling wherever they could—San Antonio, Galveston, Fredericksburg, and, of course, Salado. And she liked simply being outside in the gazebo or the pool, feeling the sun, the wind, the water, and watching the deer and the birds.

Courtney is survived by her mother Marie Werkenthin Long; her sister Kylee Long Snodgrass and her husband Ken; her maternal grandparents Max and Vivian Werkenthin; her father Gerald Lee Long and half-sister Heather Barone; her uncle and aunt Max and Karen Werkenthin; her cousin Max, his wife Melissa, and their children Sophie and Max Roman Werkenthin.

Throughout her life, Courtney was blessed to have her grandparents as her caregivers while her mother taught school. She also had many wonderful therapists, doctors, and teachers who became part of her life through their desire to enhance Courtney's ability to communicate, to strengthen her physically, and to prepare her for the future. These dedicated professionals will always hold a special place in our hearts, especially Mandi Holley, her attendant; Linda Lindamood, speech therapist and dear friend; Karen Wagner, physical therapist; and Nancy Baden, speech therapist.

A special thank-you goes to her excellent hospice nurses, Kimberly Ming, Virginia Caldwell, Don Evans, and Gwen Edwards for taking such good care of Courtney.

Courtney is now singing with the choirs of angels and running and playing with the beloved pets who preceded her in death. If anyone wishes to make a donation in Courtney's

memory, please donate to the Austin Humane Society. “Until one has loved an animal, a part of one’s soul remains unawakened.” (Anatole France)
There will be no public service.

