

Eulogy for Michelle Marsh
By Kierstin Smolinski

In a photography studio where I worked 19 years ago a bubbly, brown eyed girl walked in and changed my life forever. Our mutual love for horses and our passion for life bonded us together instantly and from that day on I had my best friend to grow through life with.

Since then we have shared so much together, we were each other's shoulder to cry on through boy troubles, we shared each other's joy when we both fell in love, we walked down each other's aisles when we both got married, we shared the miracle of motherhood in each other's hospital rooms with the births of all of our amazing children, we were each other's strength when we were weak, we shared each other's hopes and dreams and watched them unfold before our eyes, we traveled together to so many places on this earth that we never thought we'd see and experienced the beauty of them together, we lived life to it's fullest and felt so blessed with what God has given us and we did that together....and we had so many plans of what the future would hold for us and our families.....together.

As much as Michelle was my very best friend, when I look out into this audience today I realize that she was also a best friend to so many of you. And that is because of the amazing woman that she was. She touched so many lives because her character was genuine. She has friends from every walk of life because everyone she came into contact with she would impact and we all felt that love from her because it was so transparent and real. Not necessarily from her physically, because we all know how she loved her personal space and that hugs just weren't her "thing",

but she overcompensated so much for that with her warm eyes and kind and gentle spirit.

Michelle had so many gifts, but the one that we all saw day to day is the way she would light up a room. Whether it be in her barn clothes covered in horse manure or decked out and sparkly for a night out...wherever she went she glowed. Her smile was like no other and her positive attitude and happy demeanor effected whoever she came into contact with.

She had so many other gifts that God blessed her with, which in turn blessed all of us. Her ability to capture so many people's memories through her beautiful photography was second to none. That gift will live on forever with all of the pictures she had taken that we are all blessed to have in our possession.

Then there was her amazing gift with horses and her animals, this was Michelle's true passion. This started at a very young age and transformed into a very huge part of who she was in this life. She was extremely talented with showing, jumping, teaching 4H, teaching her children and many others how to ride, judging horseshows and always found the time to be searching the internet for that perfect breed of horse that had that wow factor. For the last few years of her life she was able to spend each day doing what she loved and wanted to do by spending it with her horses and all her animals and just loving on them day in and day out.

One thing she said to me during the construction of her dream barn was how happy it made her. She said that she knew her house was beautiful, but nevermind that - we had to check out the barn! She said that she felt like Tigger on Winnie the Pooh and that she couldn't stop bouncing around while walking due to all

the excitement in her step that it gave her. I can picture her now spending her days with all her beloved animals that left this world before her, Lovebug, TC, Bonamy, Foxy, Fio, Styles, Willie and Cohen.

Michelle was an artist, she was able to paint the most beautiful murals with the touch of a brush and the vision of what she could create with the talent that was within her. These last few months of her life she painted the biggest and most beautiful display of her life in the daycare that her and Todd just opened. She would spend all day on her farm with her animals and family and then spend every waking hour at night painting and listening to music. She spent countless hours fulfilling her vision of what she wanted to create for those children on all those walls and loved every single minute of it. It wasn't a job to her, it was her gift to contribute to Todd's vision for their future.

Michelle loved the water, everything about it and was fortunate enough in life to spend her summers on the water and up in Maine with her family and friends. She could do it all, waterski, sail, jetski, tube, drive the boat and teach those around her just how it was supposed to be done. She did it all with such grace and ease that we would all just watch her in awe.

There were so many things that Michelle was, she was a perfect daughter and loved her parents unconditionally, the relationship that she had with her mother (or Doodles as we know her) was one of a kind, she was a loving sister and held her brother so near and dear to her heart, she was a teacher of children that will always remember how patient she was with them, she was a devoted member of her community, she loved her neighbors, her book club, town and friends that welcomed their family in with

open arms. Michelle loved her life and lived every day to it's fullest.

Michelle was gifted as a mother and was blessed with three beautiful children to share this gift with. Her kids were her life and encompassed every aspect of it. She loved to be with them and was so proud of what they were growing up to be and the character that she instilled in each one of them. She demonstrated such insurmountable strength through Liam's sickness that no one thought was humanly possible, but she rose above it with leaps and bounds and pressed on to see her son healed of Leukemia.

Morgan - you were the bright ray of sunshine in your mother's life
Tristan - you were the reason for that twinkle in her eye
Liam - you were your mother's miracle

Morton, T and Tuna, your mother loved you more than life itself and her legacy will continue to live in each one of you. She will be holding your hand throughout the rest of your lives and will always be here for you in spirit.

Michelle was a loyal and devoted wife, in every sense of those words. She found her true companion in Todd and loved him unconditionally. Together they were a dynamic couple, because she balanced him where he needed it and he balanced her where she needed it. But together, they were a perfect match and could accomplish anything they put their minds to. For the entire 12.5 years of their marriage together they have touched so many lives in so many ways. Last night was a testament to this with the abundant amount of people that went through the line to pay their respects for the tragic loss of this beloved couple.

Michelle had the biggest heart of anyone I know. No one will ever take her place and even though she is gone from this life, she will always live on in all of our hearts and will be missed more than any words can ever express.

*If tears could build a stairway,
and memories a lane, I'd walk
right up to heaven and bring you
home again.*