

Kaitlyn “Katy Bug” Delobel

November 6, 1995 ~ May 18, 2023

Early May 18th, 2023, our beloved Kaitlyn “Katy Bug” Delobel took a quiet, much-needed rest safely wrapped in her parent’s arms. Diagnosed in 1996 with Canavan’s disease, Kaitlyn's future was full of unknowns. Like others born with this rare disease, she spent a substantial amount of time in hospitals and ICUs fighting the odds to live beyond the first decade of her life. Always the optimist, Kaitlyn battled everything this cruel disease could throw at her, and proved more resilient than anyone could imagine, having never lost a fight in 27 years.

Our beautiful Kaitlyn loved and fought tirelessly to be with her family. In return, she was loved and absolutely endeared by everyone who met her. Shawn and Tammy, along with their three other children (Casey, Dyllan, and Michaela), dedicated their lives to giving Kaitlyn a life of love and happiness. Kaitlyn could frequently be seen on her Daddy’s shoulder while he coached her brothers, laughing constantly at her dad’s often “colorful" remarks. Tammy stayed home from day one, caring for Kaitlyn with a love and determination that was nothing short of awe-inspiring. The entire family always made it a priority to include Kaitlyn in everything they did, ensuring she knew and could feel the love and support of everyone around her.

It was this sweet little girl that taught us perfection is often found in the most imperfect places. Her pure joy inspired the nickname "Katy-Bug", which led many family members and friends to get “Katy-Bug” tattoos. Those closest to her also instinctively adopted a unique voice when talking to her. They were animated and always intent on getting her to smile or laugh. For those that know, you're hearing some of those voices in your head right now.

Kaitlyn’s family are big University of Utah football fans (go Utes!). So whenever possible, she came to the tailgate lot and brought an unmatched energy to the wildest bunch of knuckleheads on campus. She also loved going on family vacations, where she was often ridiculously spoiled. Kaitlyn especially loved trips to Bear Lake with her family, kicking back on the beach looking for the “bears” on the lake. She loved Disneyland and went several times, riding her favorite ride “It's a Small World” in her dad's arms over and over again, always with a smile from ear to ear. She was even able to attend two Oakland Raiders football games and met players on the sideline. Unfortunately, it was her only regret in life that she wasn't able to convince her family to choose a better football team.

Kaitlyn loved the band Maroon5 and Adam Levine in particular. She also loved scary movies. The more screaming, the better. After watching “The Grudge” with her Aunt Janiel, she even came up with her own terrifying Grudge growls. She also loved the color pink, because no matter how hard she had to fight, she never stopped being a little lady. There was also the annual phone call from Aunt Shelley for a rendition of “Happy Birthday”. This always brought her huge smiles and eyes trying to find where Aunt Shelley was in the room.

Her laughter was contagious, and her smile could brighten any room. She never missed a beat and often laughed at the most inappropriate comments from those around her, erasing any doubt that she didn't know exactly what was going on… all the time.

Kaitlyn was a pioneer. She was one of the original seven “Gene Therapy Kids” that received the very first gene therapy trial in 1998 at Yale University and appeared in a documentary called “Little Heroes”. She also beat the odds by living longer than any other child with Canavan's disease.

Kaitlyn made her family’s life a crazy and beautiful journey and we are all infinitely better for having known her. Without a single word, she showed us all that this life is messy, full of love, and always worth fighting for. Her heroes were her Mom, Dad, Sister, and Brothers.

Kaitlyn was made an aunt early and although she was never fond of babies, she loved her nephew, Jackson. He learned quickly how to watch for Kaitlyn and always told grandma when she coughed. Her two nieces, Lenore Kaitlyn Delobel and Izzayla Kaitlyn Delobel were examples of the love her family had for her to honor them with her name.

We are so grateful for the many therapists, doctors, and teachers, that were an intricate part of Kaitlyn’s life!

Kaitlyn is survived by her parents, Shawn and Tammy Delobel, her brothers: Casey Delobel, Dyllan (Lindsay) Delobel, and sister Michaela Delobel. Grandparents: Joe (Sandy) Delobel and Larry Truesdell. She is proceeded in death by her grandma, Becky Truesdell “Don’t forget to burp the baby mama!”

Funeral Services will be held on Thursday, May 25, 2023 at 10:00 AM at Larkin Sunset Gardens Mortuary, 1950 East Dimple Dell Road, Sandy, Utah. A viewing will be held from 9:00 - 9:45 just prior to the funeral. Interment to follow at Larkin Sunset Gardens Cemetery.