

Crash victim talented singer

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eventually came in and played and the voice that came out of her! She was great, she lit up the entire room. We just couldn't believe how talented she was."

The guitar circle would not be the last time Lauren wowed people with her voice, making everyone cry with renditions of Jewel's Who Will Save Your Soul and her mother's favourite song, At Last, by Etta James, at Charmaine's birthday last year.

"She got up on stage in front of everyone and just started singing. No one could believe it. No one knew about her talent, I knew, but no one else did," she said. "She loved singing and dancing and being crazy and silly. We used to laugh so much together. Always sending texts to one another to make the other giggle."

Charmaine recounted how her daughter's vocal abilities inspired her own attempts, recalling the hours she spent learning Hush Little Baby, before, one night, sitting on Lauren's bedside and breaking out into the lullaby.

"She just said to me, 'Oh, mommy,'" Charmaine added, tears welling up in her eyes.

After graduating from Huron Heights Secondary School, excelling in two very different pastimes — car mechanics and dance — Lauren held down a number of jobs, including with K.J. Beamish as a "flag girl" and preparing food and making orders at Nature's Emporium.

"She loved to cook and took great care of her home, inside and out," she said. "She wanted to have children so badly."

At her Celebration of Life, her friends

remarked about one particularly fond memory of Lauren at work when she dumped her lunch on the road to capture and then release a mouse deep into a nearby field to ensure its survival, also remarking on her "huge heart" and the sparkle in her eye.

"She was a huge animal lover. She always had to have one to look after," she said, remarking on the care she put into tending to her two dogs, Butters and Bonnie.

When relaxing, her mother said she loved nothing more than to sit around a campfire, preferring camping and the outdoors to all else.

Charmaine also recounted how, on that final night before Lauren left her home, she had not wanted her to go, blowing her a "million kisses", each of them giving one another Lauren's trademark "bear hugs".

"When you see your child and you give them a big kiss goodbye, you never think it's going to be the last time," she said. "You think, 'Oh, she's got her whole life ahead of her'. I want to tell people to hug your kids, because you never know, I didn't think it was going to happen in a million years."

Lauren's brother, Garrett, put it best, according to Charmaine, when he wrote in Lauren's memory card: "Intense is a word often used to describe Lauren," he wrote. "She was an indescribably beautiful person with a passion for life and a spark that caught everyone's attention. She loved and fought fiercely. Everything she did, she did it with every ounce of herself, the way she taught, the way she stood, the way she spoke and the way she hugged like she was never letting go."

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