

Biography of Michelle Lang

Michelle Lang was born in Fort Gordon, GA on a stormy night, May 10, 1962. She had two brothers Billy and Steven. She celebrated her first birthday aboard an ocean liner somewhere between North America and Europe. Michelle was an "Army brat" and some of her early childhood years were spent in Germany. She easily made friends and felt right at home wherever she went and was excited when her father was assigned to Fort Ord, CA in 1967. Michelle wrote many letters and baked lots of cookies for her "Daddy" while he was in Vietnam. She even sent him a Christmas tree decorated with strings of pop corn which he described as "the best tree I ever ate."

Michelle could hardly wait to be old enough to join the Girl Scouts and become a Brownie. She never missed a meeting and took part in all of their events. Michelle also liked to be involved in sports. When she was in second grade at Patton School on Fort Ord, Michelle played soccer and was the team captain. Her teacher wrote a note in Michelle's report card saying, "She is playing soccer strongly." Michelle held on to that report card all of her life.

The Lang family bought a house in Marina where Michelle was a student at Lone Olson Elementary and Los Arboles Middle schools. In her junior and senior years at Notre Dame High School in Salinas, Michelle would attend classes every afternoon in Monterey to study cosmetology at the Monterey Beauty College and was a licensed hairstylist before graduating from high school in 1980. She enrolled at West Valley College in Saratoga with aspirations of becoming a travel agent. However, before Michelle could graduate, she met and fell in love with Tom, a young, handsome soldier, and got married. They settled in Pacific Grove and had two little boys, Ian and Patrick. A feisty black puppy, Lizzy, along with 2 cats, Jezebel and Oliver became part of the family.

Michelle was in her glory while being a mother. She never tired of caring for and loving her two precious children, giving them all of her time and attention. She often sang and read to them. She raised flowers from seed and tried her hand at growing vegetables. Much to the boys' disappointment and dismay, the veggies grew and were edible! When her sons needed help and assurance with a problem in their young lives, Michelle was quick to say "You don't know, until you try." She taught them to see the good in people, she had a big heart for the down-and-out. Ian and Patrick remember to this day that whenever their Mom saw a homeless person begging on the side of the road, Michelle would go to the nearest McDonald's or Burger King return with a bag of food.

Michelle and Tom were involved in any activities in which Ian and Patrick enjoyed participating. They went to the beach for picnics, flew kites on windy days, rode their bikes to the neighborhood store, put up a tent in the backyard for sleepovers, and had great birthday parties. One year when their house was being remodeled, Michelle found a way to turn the unfinished portion into a Ninja Turtles habitat to make it look like a sewer. The kids went crazy over this and from then on, Ian's and Patrick's birthdays were marked on their friends' calendars.

Michelle volunteered for all of her boys' activities. Whatever the need was, she filled the spot. After returning to work as a hairstylist, she found time to be a room mother in preschool and kindergarten. She was a sports mom and kept score at her sons' Little League games. Michelle taught her boys the fine art of baking cookies and cupcakes, which came in handy when another dozen batches were needed for a school event.

As Michelle's boys grew, so was her desire to fulfill her dream of becoming a travel agent. A trip to Europe with Tom lit a spark in Michelle's soul and upon their return she enrolled in a ROP class for travel agents. Michelle worked during the day, studied at night, and completed all assignments and classes. As a licensed travel agent, she put together great trips and campouts for her sons' Boy Scout pack while serving as Den Leader and Pack Secretary. Michelle was never happier with Tom, Ian and Patrick by her side.

As a travel agent, Michelle found her niche with her happy smile, knowledge, and enthusiasm for her job. With her sense of humor, Michelle made clients feel comfortable and they trusted her to take good care of them by finding the best travel deals. Michelle had a gift of making people around her feel special. She would bring the travel documents to clients who had booked at the last minute and had no second to spare. She got lost on one such mission and flagged down a police officer who helped her find the address with sirens blazing – the same officer who had been bitten by Lizzy many years earlier. This officer, later recalling the incident of meeting up again with Michelle, said "The thing that impressed me most about her was her panic in getting the tickets delivered in time and her great smile."

Since December 29, 1994, Michelle has been smiling down on us and she keeps a good eye out for everyone who loved her while she was alive. Michelle died trying to save another soul; she was 32 years old. ☹️