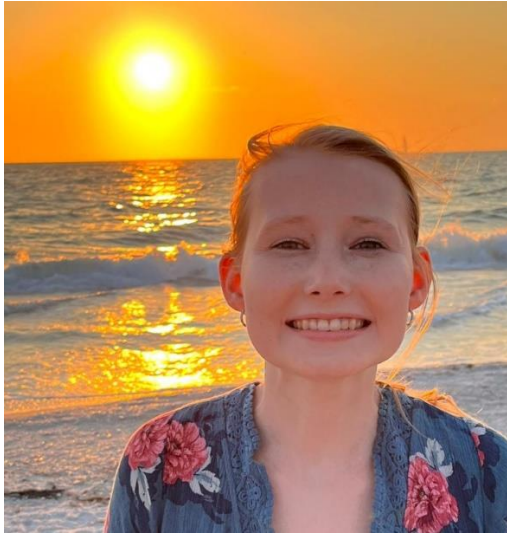


Lakken Burzynski, 21, passed away on the morning of Thursday, May 23 with her family by her side.

She was born on June 9, 2002 at Sacred Heart Hospital in Eau Claire to Greg and Katie Burzynski. When Lakken was only 10 years old, she was diagnosed with medulloblastoma, a cancerous brain tumor, and spent the next 13 months receiving treatment. During that time, Lakken constantly exuded a “let’s do it” attitude during every poke, procedure, and treatment, and she did everything with a smile on her face. She adopted a quote that she soon was known by: “Never let anything dull your sparkle.” Lakken was declared cancer-free in November of 2013 and remained NED (no evidence of disease) for the next 10 years.



Following her diagnosis and treatment, Lakken spent two years as a Miracle Kid for Children’s Miracle Network Hospitals at Marshfield Children’s Hospital. This role allowed her to share her story through speaking at fundraising events, starring in local Walmart or Dairy Queen commercials, and meeting other kids like her. She grew very comfortable being on the stage and continued sharing her story whenever she could. Over the years, Lakken had shared her story so many times that she memorized her speech word-for-word and was always ready to speak. Given her prior health complications, this was quite the accomplishment considering her doctors warned her that she’d struggle with memory and retention due to the location of her tumor.

In high school, Lakken starred in multiple performances as part of the drama club and was a member of choir, National Honor Society, student council, FCCLA, and FFA. Lakken served as the president of her FCCLA chapter her senior year and spent two years showing sheep for FFA during her high school career. She was the runner-up of the Miss Stanley competition in 2019 and spent that summer perfecting her princess wave at local parades. She loved spending her time baking cookies, cakes, and bars and sharing her sweets with other people. Although she never let her health history get in her way, her family recalls one occasion where Lakken was making sugar cookies from scratch and accidentally replaced the sugar with a cup of salt, resulting in some bitter cookies and a priceless memory. She learned from her mistakes and perfected her recipes over time—to the point where on two separate occasions, she baked and donated a cheesecake for local fundraisers. Both of these cheesecakes were featured on live auctions and each sold for nearly \$3,000.

Despite her cognitive challenges, Lakken graduated in the Top 10 of her class at Stanley-Boyd High School and then went on to pursue a degree in early childhood education from UW-Eau Claire. She had big dreams of graduating from college, becoming an elementary teacher, using her past experiences to advocate for kids who needed someone on their team, and volunteering her free time to help families affected by cancer. On May 22, 2023, during her junior year of college, a regularly-scheduled checkup resulted in a concerning brain scan. Two months later, Lakken was diagnosed with a new form of brain cancer—glioblastoma—for which there unfortunately is no cure.

Lakken took this news with the utmost bravery and altruism. Throughout her second battle, she continued to show more concern for the people she loved than for herself. Her love for baking

cheesecakes, completing arts and crafts, and listening to country music never faltered. Lakken was known and adored among her family for her quick wit and sassy attitude. Although her cognitive functioning steeply declined in her final months, she never lost that quick wit and always managed a clever comment.

During her second battle with cancer, Lakken's newest mantra was to "Live each day like it's your last." In her attempt to live life to the fullest, she had plenty of special experiences in the last year: a "Best Day Ever" experience provided by close family friend Benny Anderson which included a private concert from Chris Kroeze, an impromptu extended-family weekend in Nashville, her first-time trip to Door County, meeting and enjoying dinner with Charlie Berens, multiple professional sporting events with her boyfriend, and a concert to see her all-time favorite, Luke Combs, with her father and younger sister.

Lakken loved her family so deeply and would do anything to make them happy. She was the most thoughtful gift-giver, ever-reliable helper, and lover of everyone. She lived her life with the goal of putting a smile on everyone else's face to match her own. She never had a bad word to say about another person, and anyone would be hard-pressed to find something negative to say about her. Lakken will be remembered for the true joy and light she radiated each and every day. In her nearly 22 years, she has touched the lives of so many people—both young and old—and her legacy will live on through the people who loved her.

Lakken is survived by many loved ones including her parents, Greg and Katie (Abramczak) Burzynski; her siblings, Taylor (Benjamin) Turner, Breckin Burzynski, and Kinsley Burzynski; paternal grandparents Jane Burzynski and Todd Rogan; maternal grandparents Janet and Richard Abramczak; Great grandmother, Dorothy Wozniak, special friend Luke Shermo; and her many loving aunts, uncles, and cousins. She is preceded in death by her great grandparents, John Wozniak, Chester and Betty Abramczak, Alvin Benzschawel, and Ed and Mildred Smith.

Funeral Services will be at 11AM on Thursday, May 30, 2024 at Jacob's Well Church, 989 122nd St, Chippewa Falls, WI 54729. Visitation will be from 4-8 PM on Wednesday at the Plombon Funeral Home-Stanley and one hour prior to service Thursday at the church.

To honor Lakken and her longtime history of giving back and making a difference, donations can be made to Joshua's Camp, which has served as an ever-supportive backbone throughout her entire journey. Donations can be made at <https://www.joshuascamp.org/>.