



Laura "Lala" Whalen

April 10, 2026

Laura "Lala" G. Whalen (Eckman), 41, of Windsor, Colorado, formerly of Buffalo, New York, passed away peacefully on April 10, 2026. She was born in Ft. Leonard Wood, Missouri.

Laura was raised in Buffalo, New York, and graduated from Leonardo Da Vinci High School. She also lived in Florida and Northern Colorado. On May 13, 2011, she married the love of her life, Shaun M. Whalen, in Buffalo, New York.

She devoted much of her life to both her work in retail and raising her children. Her most rewarding role was her final position as a store manager at a Michael's store.

Laura was an avid runner and outdoor adventurer who loved hiking, cooking, creating artwork, and traveling. She also enjoyed chasing Pokémon and spending time with friends.

Family was at the center of Laura's life. She cherished the many vacations and holidays shared with those she loved.

She will be remembered for her kindness, devotion, and unwavering spirit. Laura was a woman of strength, love, and quiet resilience—a fearless warrior through many battles.

In addition to her husband Shaun, Laura is survived by her two beloved children, Zoey M. Craig and Grayson C. Whalen; her parents, Ranie (Gail) and Christopher Eckman of Torrington, Wyoming (formerly of Tonawanda, New York); her brother, Brian Eckman of Tonawanda, New York; and many aunts, uncles, and cousins.

Laura's ashes will be spread at Rocky Mountain National Park during a private family ceremony. A Celebration of Life will be held at a later date in Western New York.

In lieu of flowers please make donations to your favorite National Park, Animal Rescue or Sanctuary, or plant a tree in Laura's memory.

Tribute Wall

RE

“ To my beautiful daughter... You were my little girl yesterday, my closest friend today, and my daughter for all my tomorrows. I hope you always felt how proud I am of you. I will always love you endlessly!! 🙏 ”

Love,
Your Lady "Mom"



Ranie Gail Eclman - April 29 at 10:08 PM



“ 4 files added to the tribute wall ”



Michelle Candino Kuhl - April 25 at 02:38 PM



“ *My heart always longed for adventure, and so did yours. You always knew where to point us next.*

*Alaska, Hawaii, Florida, California,
Roswell, New Mexico, New York, Washington...*

We went everywhere.

We hiked everywhere.

We ate everywhere.

*And we were always talking about the next
the next place to try,
the next place to see,
the next adventure waiting for us.*

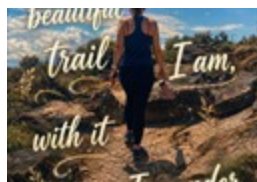
*My heart aches from this loss.
You meant the world to me.*

*All these small habits keep circling,
searching for a place to rest.*

*Some part of me followed when you left
I don't believe it will return.*

*What light remains
will stand guard,
as promised.*

*I love you
in this world,
and whatever comes next.*



Shaun Whalen - April 24 at 07:25 PM

LC

“ Well what can I say about my niece Laura. She was a beautiful person inside and out, also a wonderful mom , a great manager at her job and in life. After she moved to Colorado her family did come up at Christmas time and we all had a great visit together. Unfortunately she was taken way too soon. I guess another angel was needed but without a doubt in my mind she is watching down on all of us especially her children Zoe and Grayson. She will be surely missed . Linda Candino

Linda Candino - April 24 at 09:10 AM



“ I will see you in the trees & feel the breeze of you pass ..



Michelle Candino Kauhl - April 23 at 09:08 PM



“ It is with so much sadness to even have to write this. To write about such a beautiful young woman who loved life & tried to live it to its fullest. Someone so young to pass is wrong. Its just wrong.



My cousin Laura, your Mom, had 10 first cousins on your grandfather's side. Her & I were 9 years apart so our lives didnt meet up until we were a bit older..

Laura was very quiet, I have no idea how we were related? Lol. Your mom also had the thickest, fastest growing & strongest hair in our entire eckman side of the family, her hair was awesome. Again, how are we related? Her fair skin, red thick hair?! Definitely your grandma's side!! Lol

Before you had moved to Florida we reconnected.. we had you all over for many New Years Eve's. Our roaring 20s 2020 one was a blast. Your mom made vegan mac & cheese & no one even knew! Ha!

Your mom being vegan.. who am i gonna send memes of bacon & chicken to from now on? I picked on her all the time for being vegan. I mean how can you not eat bacon?? Lol

Laura & Shaun were in my husband's & I fake wedding. We all dressed up & went out, I wore my wedding gown & we had a fake bridesmaids & groomsmen!

I had laura & a another friend Kristen as bridesmaids. Kristens husbad is also named shawn, just spelled different, those two were best men. Ironically each couple had matching suit jackets, ties & dress colors.. it was hysterical! We went to Salvators (which is a fancy restaurant) to complete the fake event!! Omg our whole meal was messed up! Your dad's chicken was half raw, yet they still charged money for half or something?? Our waitress never came around, our drinks were wrong. It was a funny disaster. But I will say we had a great time! Your mom even danced on a bar table in a bar- yes she did!! Lol lol

We visited you all a few times in Florida. We all went to the these really cool parks, lunch & then to beach at sunset. The one time I came alone your mom taught me how to thrift like a champ! We

*spent the entire day shopping, eating & having fun..
I will deeply miss your mom. She was a good person, good soul &
honest friend.. Laura fought hard & long. Its not fair & its not right. I
have many flashes of so many memories that cross my mind ..
Christmas's, Easters especially. I remember when Laura was very
young & Brian was in diapers their family staying with us for a bit
when they moved back to NY from Missouri. It just doesnt seem real
that someone so full of life, wanting to live, taking care of herself is
robbed of life. It is just so incredibly sad. I am so grateful for the time
we had together. Laura will be forever missed.*

Michelle Candino Kauh - April 23 at 09:06 PM

KF

“ *I was only luckily enough to spend time with her for a night out with
friends. I met her for the first time that night. We were both quite at
first then we got to know each other and we opened up. We had a
great night laughing, dancing, walking the streets of downtown
Buffalo. Her family and friends will miss a great person.*

Kristin Fickett - April 23 at 04:49 PM

JE

“ *I'm so sorry for your loss. I was lucky enough to meet her back in
high-school. Probably saw her everyday back then , we were part of
a tight circle of friends. We would meet up occasionally before she
moved , i wish I had prioritized seeing her more. She was a great
friend* 💔

Jessica Escabi - April 21 at 06:53 PM

ZC

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Zoey Craig - April 20 at 11:41 AM



“ Think of Laura by Christopher Cross Lyrics

(Hey Laura, Laura)

(Hey Laura, Laura)

*Every once in a while, I'd see her smile
And she'd turn my day around
A girl with those eyes could stare through the lies
And see what your heart was saying*

*Think of Laura, but laugh, don't cry
I know she'd want it that way
Hey, yeah, when you think of Laura, but laugh, don't cry
I know she'd want it that way*

*A friend of a friend, a friend 'til the end
That's the kind of girl she was
Taken away so young
Taken away without a warning*

*Think of Laura, but laugh, don't cry
I know she'd want it that way
Hey, yeah, when you think of Laura, but laugh, don't cry
I know she'd want it that way*

*I know you, and you're here
In every day we live
I know her and well, she's here
I can feel her when I sing*

*Hey Laura, (Laura) where are you now?
Are you far away from here?
I don't think so
I think you're here taking our tears away*

Think of Laura, but laugh, don't cry

*I know she'd want it that way
Hey, yeah, when you think of Laura, but laugh, don't cry
I know she'd want it that way*

*Hey, yeah, well, I know she'd want it that way (Want it that way)
Hey, Laura (Laura) hey, Laura
I know she'd want it that way (Want it that way)
Hey, Laura (Laura)
Hey, Laura, I know you want it that way (Hey, Laura)*

<https://youtu.be/4Xvg-dNxT-Y?si=U5XVeWsai3xkCZtj>

I love you laura

Chris Eckman - April 19 at 09:15 PM

SS

“ *I love you Laura. You will be sorely missed.
You were an amazing person my sweet niece.*



Susan Monte (aunt sue) - April 18 at 12:36 AM



“ You were always greater than anything that could belong to just me. you were too full of life, too full of love for that. Still, I was the one who was blessed to walk beside you, to call you my wife, to witness the quiet strength and fierce kindness that defined everything you were.

You gave so much of yourself to others, your love, your patience, your laughter, your steady presence. Like a tree that bears fruit it never eats, you poured your life outward, nourishing everyone around you. And now I see that what you gave didn't disappear, it lives on in every person you touched, in every heart you lifted, in every life made better because you were in it.

I will miss you in a thousand ways that words can't hold, the sound of your voice, the warmth of your hand, the way you made even ordinary moments feel like something sacred. You were my home, my peace, my partner in everything that mattered.

If love could have kept you here, you would have stayed forever.

But even now, you are not gone in the ways that matter most. You remain in the love you gave, in the memories we carry, and in the quiet ways you are still shaping the world through all of us who were changed by you.

I will carry you with me, in every step forward, in every breath, in every act of love I try to give the way you did so effortlessly.

Thank you for choosing me. Thank you for loving me.

Until I see you again... you are, and always will be, my heart.

Shaun Whalen - April 17 at 09:49 PM