



Michael Thomas Kandel

March 7, 1989 - July 20, 2017

Michael Thomas Kandel

TRAVERSE CITY – Michael Kandel, 28, born March 7, 1989, his life ended much too soon and he will be missed by all who knew him.

Raised in Leelanau County, he attended Glen Lake School, participated in soccer, baseball, and football. Mike spent a lot of time with friends and cousins who live life to it's fullest and love having a whole lot of fun.

Mike loved the outdoors and nature so much he worked to improve Lake Michigan shoreline, inland lakes, rivers, and forests by removing invasive growth and planting native species. He loved helping plants grow from the time he was a little boy. He was close to graduating from Western Michigan University with a bachelor degree in Freshwater Science and Sustainability. He was on the Dean's list.

As soon as he turned 18 he joined the US Army, completed boot camp at Ft. Bragg and served his Country proudly and bravely for 6 years of active duty. He deployed to Afghanistan for a year in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. He was an Infantryman. While deployed Mike was promoted to Sergeant. After deployment he was stationed at Fort Wainwright, Fairbanks Alaska. He was assigned to the Army's farthest north and only Arctic Stryker Brigade Combat Team, the "Arctic Wolves ". Our soldier returned home shortly after older brother Kyle, a US Marine. Their younger sister Christy graduated from Northern Michigan University and returned home. We were so happy to be together again.

We lost Mike to a tragic accident in Sturgeon Bay on Thursday July 20, 2017. A boat returning the work crew to the starting point in Wilderness State Park had engine problems. The mechanic dove in to retrieve a pull rope that fell into the water. He had difficulty in the high waves and Mike, without thinking of himself, grabbed a life jacket and dove in to rescue his friend. Mike was a strong swimmer and SCUBA certified. He was

able to rescue the man, but at some point he suffered a severe head injury and was not able to tread water. The Coast Guard and Sheriff Department were called and rescue boats and helicopter were deployed and worked even through the night on a search and rescue mission. Mike's body was recovered on Friday morning.

He is survived by his loving family. Parents Edward and Annette (Fitzgerald) Kandel, and siblings Kyle and Christine. Mike became true friends with our practically family members Kelly Flynn (Kyle's fiancé), and Alex Flees (Christy's boyfriend). He is also survived by his grandmothers Cynthia Wilson, and Beverly Rosinski. He has many amazing and loving aunts, uncles, cousins and their families, and an awesome group of friends.

Mike was preceded in death by his Aunt Sally Kandel; grandfathers, Robert J. Fitzgerald, Edward J. Kandel Sr., Henry Wilson, grandmother, Helen Fitzgerald, and brother in spirit Zane Barnes.

We miss you Mike and will always love you.

A visitation for Michael will be held on Wednesday, July 26, 2017 from 4:00 – 7:00 pm at the Reynolds-Jonkhoff Funeral Home. A Funeral Mass will be held on Thursday, July 27, 2017 at 11:00 am at St. Philip Neri Catholic Church in Empire, with a visitation beginning at 10:00 am.

In lieu of flowers please direct memorial contributions to Michael's family, where they will direct contributions to the charity of their choice.

Please share a memory with the family by visiting Michaels tribute page found at www.reynolds-jonkhoff.com. The family is being cared for by the Reynolds-Jonkhoff Funeral Home and Cremation Services.

Events

JUL **Visitation** 04:00PM - 07:00PM

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Reynolds-Jonkhoff Funeral Home
305 Sixth St, Traverse City, MI, US, 49684

JUL **Visitation** 10:00AM - 11:00AM

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St. Philip Neri Catholic Church
11411 S. Lacore Road, Empire, MI, US, 49630

JUL **Mass of Christian Burial** 11:00AM

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St. Philip Neri Catholic Church
11411 S. Lacore Road, Empire, MI, US, 49630

Comments



“ Mikey was one of our favorites when the boys were growing up. He was always so respectful and polite and had that beautiful smile. We can't imagine the pain of losing such a special young man and our hearts and deepest sympathy are with you.
Kim & Donna Hillard



Donna Cheek Hillard - July 25, 2017 at 09:35 AM



“ Dearest Ed, Annette, Kyle, and Christy,
The loss of a child, and a sibling so close in age, is devastating. I remember "Mikey" well as one of my beloved First Graders. He was gentle and kind to everyone, and fun to be around. He epitomized those qualities as a man, and was taken too soon from this earthly life. I will look to see his star shining brightly every evening. You have my deepest sympathy and sincerest condolences.
R.I.P. Mike.

mary c. dame - July 24, 2017 at 07:33 PM



“ Sending a hug your way during this difficult time.

Karen Lauwers - July 24, 2017 at 09:35 PM



“ A true small town American hero... thanks Mike for your selfless sacrifice in defending the tenants of this great country we call home. You were always a guy/man above reproach with huge character. A very quiet leader with a closers spirit... a guy I always knew I could count on! And that SMILE. I for one will miss you greatly, thanks for making me a better coach and man for having shared your life with me. Our loss is Heavens gain! Rest easy my young friend, Love Coach Kemp!

Marc - July 24, 2017 at 09:55 PM



“ Very well put, Mr. Kemp. Mike was great to work with. His talent for finding shed antlers was unmatched! He saved a life by doing what he did and will be sorely, sorely missed.

Matthew Korody - July 24, 2017 at 11:40 PM



“ The memories of Mike are held close to our hearts. As toddlers, I recall Mikey and Colby building tents out of sheets day after day downstairs in your house. Many memories being together in second grade. On to teens- year after year at the fair. So many memories. Thank you for raising such a fine young man that I am so proud to have my son be able to call friend!

Kathi Thoreson - July 26, 2017 at 12:33 AM