



Michael Terry Palmgren

May 26, 1947 - February 12, 2014

Long Beach, California

Michael passed away due to complications from a bicycle accident August 27, 2013 while training for a triathlon on county roads in Bellingham, WA.

He grew up in Long Beach, CA, started surfing as a young boy, and developed a life long love of ocean and water sports. Michael attended public schools in Long Beach where he was a gifted student academically and musically. He excelled at sports, especially basketball and tennis. Michael loved all music, starting with violin as a child, and moving on to other stringed instruments including guitar and banjo as an adult. He was the epitome of the 1960's intellectual surfer and enjoyed life to the fullest on CA and Hawaiian beaches. During his years in Hawaii he also became an accomplished glass blower and polished his surfing skills.

He attended the University of California in Santa Barbara graduating with a BA's in Psychology and Zoology (1965-1971). Following graduation, Michael moved to Hawaii. His first position was in language study with dolphins at Kewalo Basin Marine Mammal Laboratory. From 1971 to 1979 Michael was a research associate at University of Hawaii, including work with the Hawaii Dept. of Fish and Game on fishery management plans on a NOAA vessel throughout the South Pacific.

In 1974 he participated as Dive Master/First Mate on a National Geographic sponsored cruise to study and obtain bottom samples from underwater volcanoes in the South Pacific (Samoa, French Polynesia, Tonga, Australs, Rarotonga).

Michael began his fishing career in Kona, Hawaii and in 1976 began fishing for salmon in the summers out of Cordova, Alaska on purse seine boats as a deckhand. Four years later he started working full time in the Alaskan Fishing industry. In the 1980's he briefly fished for king crab in the boom years, moving on to joint ventures for pollock from 1981 until he retired from the fishery in 2009 as a full time captain on F/V Morning Star.

From 1984 to 1992 he owned and operated the F/V Three Cousins, and from 1993 to 2013 he owned and operated the F/V Marissa for salmon fishing in Bristol Bay, AK. Michael married Sherry Thompson in Dutch Harbor, AK in 1984. His daughter Bryn Marissa was born 1989, and their son Ian Michael born in 1991. Michael and Sherry resided in Unalaska/Dutch Harbor for 12 years.

Michael had many passions, including a decade in mini-sprint car racing. More recently Michael's focus was on triathlons, half marathons, half Ironman competitions, and overall physical fitness training. He was especially happy with his latest achievement the 2013 Boise Half Ironman, finishing 1st in his age group.

Michael is survived by wife Sherry Thompson, children Bryn and Ian, his three sisters, Toni Landis, Tana Brown, Tracy Palmgren, and his nieces and nephews: Graeme Guthrie, Galen Guthrie, Gilly-Ward Guthrie, Chelsea Brown, Kela Kealakai, Brooke Landis, Hayden Landis

We would like to thank the caring staff at St. Francis Nursing Home and the Whatcom Hospice House for their thoughtful and loving care of Michael through the past months.

There will a be a celebration of Michael's life in early May and details will be posted on Care Pages.

His vibrant intellect and indefatigable energy will be missed.

Farewell Tribute Information

No services will be held.

Tribute Wall

MA

“ I didn't know Mike all that well but my friend Tim used to work on his sprint car and Mike would let me get in it sometimes after races and help drive it back to the trailer. He was such a great guy. He will be missed.

Matt - February 12, 2014 at 12:00 AM

PH

“ Going to miss our long conversations at the lake. Mowed his lawn for 9 yrs. used to take the kids for a ride on the mower.

Phil - February 12, 2014 at 12:00 AM

KA

“ To the Palmgren Family and loved ones, I am very sorry for your loss! Micheal was a great man with many amazing things going for him. I enjoyed the few times I went over to your guys house. He always was so positive and loved/cared about his family. I enjoyed seeing him out on the racetrack with a big smile on his face. He will be missed by so many people. My thoughts and prayers are with you all during the hard times.

Kari - February 12, 2014 at 12:00 AM

HE

“ Sherry, Bryn and Ian, So sorry for your loss. Mikel was an extraordinary man, so talented and creative. He was tough as nails and my family and I are glad to have known him.

Helen - February 12, 2014 at 12:00 AM

SY

“ For over 20 years Michael was one of our favorite customers; bright, engaging, inquisitive. Even after the Morning Star was sold he continued to stay in touch with us and learned every inch of his system on the Marissa. We looked forward to his visit to our shop every year during Fish Expo. It was always a pleasure to spend time with him. He will be missed.

Scott Yale - February 12, 2014 at 12:00 AM