



Taylor Lawrence Smith

JUL 5, 1988 - AUG 24, 2017



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Table of Contents

Obituary	Page 3
Tribute Wall	Page 8



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Taylor Smith, 29, of San Jose, California, passed away on August 24th 2017. Taylor's life began on July 5, 1988 in Tampa, Florida. He was born to Grant and Renee (Tallman) Smith, and was later joined by his sister, Megan Smith. Taylor was a brave, protective child and loving brother. He enjoyed the outdoors playing in a fort in the backyard with his sister and friends, and fishing with his dad. He also enjoyed playing Super Mario World and playing with K'Nex and Legos. He looked forward to yearly camping with his family throughout Florida and the Smoky Mountains. He loved penguins — so much, in fact, that his parents once took him on the Penguin Up-Close tour at Seaworld. He also loved dinosaurs; so naturally, his favorite theme park was Universal Studios, where he could ride “Jurassic Park”. Taylor had a deep love of all living things, particularly sea creatures, birds and reptiles. He raised several animals and was proud of his duck and his sister's chicken. He was extremely curious about everything around him. During his childhood, his pet collection included common pets like dogs, cats, fish, turtles, hamsters and birds. He even combined his love of science with his love of animals by naming his birds after famous scientists: Galileo, Bernoulli, and Einstein. Taylor also liked to observe all living things so he would often have lizards, crickets or some random insect — basically anything that would stay in a cage — that he could study for a while before releasing it back to nature. Taylor attended Seminole Presbyterian School, where he met childhood friends Andy Matthew and Scott Cooke. During middle school, they spent most of their days together, riding around town on Taylor's mini-bike, causing havoc. They would find abandoned buildings and break in, dive in dumpsters looking for treasures and computer hardware, and wardrive around trying to hack networks. He graduated with honors from Middleton High School where he continued to develop his interest in CISCO networking and security. As a freshman, he played football only in return for a new computer. He was the leader in the computer science



Obituary

Taylor Lawrence Smith

JUL 5, 1988 - AUG 24, 2017

program, where he directed the student technical support team and was a valued mentor to his peers. Taylor was remarkably talented with computers and was even able to gain access into the County School District's Master Database. It was during these idyllic high school years that he met close friends Adaeze Egwuatu, Evan Schiller, and the love of his life, Ashley Phillips. Taylor inspired many during these formative years. He was a wonderful, loving soul who engaged his friends; he loved to share his knowledge on a plethora of topics such as computer science, history, politics, art and music. Taylor constantly put smiles on people's faces. He loved taking his friends on long drives in his red Camaro and exploring local hidden treasures. He shared his love of the water by taking his friends out on his family's boat, searching for local islands in the bay. Taylor was extremely generous and always sought to share new experiences with his friends. Whether it was taking a friend out to try some crazy dish or simply taking someone to a spot they had never been before, Taylor was always ready to share an adventure. After graduation, he moved to Gainesville, Florida with Ashley and Adaeze, where they lived together for 6 years. There he met many friends and was the life of the party. He continued his love of travel and the outdoors. There was never a dull weekend with Taylor — whether it was a trip to the local springs, a hike on a local trail, or simply chilling on the couch watching YouTube videos — a day in his company was always filled with laughter. A few years into their time in Gainesville, they were joined by Ashley's brother and sister. To them, Taylor was a role-model, father figure, confidant and friend. During his time in Gainesville, he started his career at the University of Florida in the College of Business in IT support. He later moved to Connecticut with Ashley, where he continued with his work at Yale University, College of Medicine. He enjoyed vacationing around New England and loved riding the train to visit Manhattan. In 2015, Taylor and Ashley moved to the Bay Area. Taylor wanted nothing more than to live in California and had many dreams of all he could accomplish here. He was inspired by the scenery and excited to immerse himself in the technical culture of Silicon Valley. He was a dedicated employee of Insurity Software, where he worked as a Cloud Systems Administrator and loved to work on security. Everyone was very optimistic about his career and what the future held. He married Ashley on March 17,



Obituary

Taylor Lawrence Smith

JUL 5, 1988 - AUG 24, 2017

2017 at the Ybor City Museum State Park in Tampa, Florida, surrounded by family and friends. He celebrated his honeymoon in Puerto Rico where he was elated to Scuba Dive with his wife. He wanted to be a provider — he was an extremely responsible, loving, and dedicated husband who would have been an outstanding father. With his wife, he lovingly cared for his dog, Jasmine, and two cats, Elvis and Diesel. Those who had the pleasure of knowing Taylor remember he was a multifaceted individual, a man of many interests, someone full of knowledge, which he was eager to share with the world. Taylor was an adult child. He loved to play with toys and games every day of his life. His favorite toys were electronic, but he also collected Legos and Star Wars models. His birthday was the day after July 4th and he loved fireworks. He enjoyed playing music day and night, but especially first thing in the morning. He recently started raising sea monkeys and bought an ant farm. Taylor had a deep respect for nature and loved to be outdoors. He was adventurous and fearless. He LOVED to be in or on the water where he felt at peace. His first word was “agua” and he loved taking baths and “soaking”. No matter where he went he jumped in. He even chose to be baptized in the Gulf of Mexico. Although he was raised Christian, he was extremely knowledgeable about all religions, civilizations, and political movements. It was important to Taylor to study all cultures to learn how his brothers and sisters from all walks of life experienced the world. When he moved into a house on a canal as a teenager he was excited because he thought by being on the water “he had access to the whole world in his backyard”. Taylor spent most of his time taking things apart and rebuilding them. He was a self described “Maker, Breaker, and General Trouble Maker”, and was fascinated with how technology works. As a child, he had a passion for technology and received his first computer at 11 years old — a custom built 486 with 4.5 inch floppy disk drives and a custom high-speed dial-up modem. From then on, he spent many long nights researching how to make and break functions of the Internet. In the next few years he began organizing monthly local 2600 Hacker Quarterly meetings, and hosted an internet talk show. — At age 15, he set up his first professional network and maintained 15 PC’s and other devices for a local company. By age 17, he was able to gain access into personal accounts for one of the leading credit card companies. Throughout his life, he was



Obituary

Taylor Lawrence Smith

JUL 5, 1988 - AUG 24, 2017

involved in multiple communities and was an advocate for freedom of information and personal liberties. At age 16, he took his family on vacation to Manhattan for a Hackers on Planet Earth (HOPE) meeting. Taylor was inspired by the work of Kevin Mitnick and was honored to meet him. A dream come true, he attended several 2600 and DEFCON conferences where he met many friends and was able to share his passion. Everywhere he went he would exclaim, "Hack the Planet." He was an anarcho-syndicalist, who believed in anti-establishment; he wanted social justice and less government. He was always against things like mass surveillance and police brutality. Taylor could never sit down; he was full of energy. He was a passionate and captivating person who made friends everywhere he went. He brought people together and was the life of the party. He was well respected by friends, colleagues and online communities. Taylor was the type of person who could dine with the Queen of England or camp with the Rainbow family. He was a teacher to everyone he met and will live on through us. He was empathetic, introspective, spiritual and self-aware. No one could be as prepared as Taylor for the journey after life. He had a deep respect of a higher power and trusted in the way that the universe would unfold. He was loved by all and will be deeply missed. Sleep peacefully our friend, until we meet again. Taylor is survived by his wife, Ashley Phillips (San Jose), parents Grant and Renee (Tallman) Smith (Belmont, CA), sister Megan Smith (Belmont, CA). Grandparents Jon and Cindy Tallman, and Joan and Ken Houtchel. Extended surviving relatives include Randy Tallman, Ryan (Laura) Tallman, Luke Tallman, Zach Tallman, Hayley Tallman, Kyle Tallman, Taylor McAdams, Cherie (Frank) Nelson, Christopher Nelson, Jake Nelson, Cade Nelson, Jon Tallman, Zoe Tallman, Bram Tallman, Karen (Danny) Riffe, Erika Riffe, Ward Smith, Griffin Smith, and Dylan Smith. Friends include Andy Matthew, Scott Cooke, Adaeze Egwuatu, Giselle Boothby, Evan Schiller, Rhea Donatello, Anthony Donatello and many, many others. His pets include a dog named Jasmine, and two cats- Elvis and Diesel. Taylor is predeceased by Grandfather Hugh Smith, and Friends Jimmy Butler, and Jason Brooker. The funeral will be held at Skylawn Funeral Home & Memorial Park, 100 Lifemark Rd San Mateo, CA 94062-4592. Visitation takes place Saturday September 2, 2017 from 10 am- 1pm. The Service takes place Saturday September 2, 2017 from



Obituary

Taylor Lawrence Smith

JUL 5, 1988 - AUG 24, 2017

1:00 pm – 2:30 pm with Pastor Richard Bowman. The reception will be held on Saturday September 2, 2017 following the service at the residence Grant and Renee Smith, 1835 Mezes Ave, Belmont, CA 94002. A Celebration of Life will be held at 2:00 PM on Saturday – October 14, 2017 at 14532 Coloma Lane Odessa, FL 33556.



Tribute Wall

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Scott And Tamara Allen posted:

What a moving piece your family was able to write because you lived life so fully. Bless you darling. Bless your family. You left them with an undeniable legacy. We can all only hope to do life as fully as you did. Love to all n Bradley Allen's parents

September 4 at 7:38 AM



Marlow Olson posted:

So very sorry to hear about Taylor. We were always hoping to "spend some time." But such a distance! Praying that we will be able to see you soon though. Blessings!

August 31 at 12:33 PM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Taylor by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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