



## Madeline Elizabeth Craig

June 23, 1997 - April 5, 2026

Madeline Elizabeth Craig, 28, of Sequatchie, Tennessee, passed away unexpectedly on April 5, 2026. Born on June 23, 1997, in Peachtree City, Georgia, Madeline also lived in Chesapeake, Virginia, The Colony, Texas, and Southwest Florida during her lifetime. Madeline was known for her soft heart, kind spirit, and unrivaled love for her family, friends, and the animals who she loved like children.

Madeline, known to many as “Mads,” “Mad Dawg,” “Mad Ellie,” or uniquely to her sister as “Madagascar,” was a devout Christian who loved the Lord and lived her life to exemplify His selfless, faithful, loving, gracious, and forgiving spirit. Mads did not command a room with grandiosity or performance - but instead guided and drew others in with her bright light, palpable softness, and relentlessly kind spirit.

Informally, Madeline served as her sister’s talk therapist, her mother’s sous-chef, and her father’s undesignated DJ; the ultimate hype-woman to all her girlfriends; and as a gifted stylist to her friends and family, whether they wanted it or not. Those who knew Madeline best knew her quick wit, sharp sense of humor, and her never-ending arsenal of jokes, funny phrases, and smooth dance moves. Madeline’s laugh was infectious, genuine, and came from her soul rather than her lungs. The sound of her laugh lifted heavy hearts and eased the most troubled of minds.

Formally, Madeline was a dedicated, licensed massage therapist by trade, using her very existence to sense and heal pain in others, oftentimes easing the pain others cannot see. A true empath, Mads loved fiercely, listened intently, and acted intentionally; to know Madeline was to know kindness, joy, and a true sense of healing in all forms.

A self-proclaimed bad driver, she loved riding shotgun with her sister Katlyn (affectionately renamed “Kitty”), blasting a carefully curated playlist of country, emo rock, Kesha, Drake, and Cardi B. On the weekends, she could be caught watching the Dallas Cowboys or the Georgia Bulldogs, playing a decent game of cornhole, or soaking up the sun with her dad, Stephen. As a true testament to her family-oriented nature, her best friend in the whole world was her mother, Kelli; together, Kelli and Madeline showered people with chef-worthy meals, heart-warming gifts, and by hosting gatherings for family and friends to come together. Madeline’s closest friends can attest to being indoctrinated or adopted into Madeline’s family as if they were her own flesh and blood.

Madeline loved expressing her selfless and nurturing nature by being a mom to her plants, dogs, ducks, cats, and lizard, cooking for others, and gardening. She loved Harry Potter marathons, Halloween and Christmas decorations, the smell of suntan lotion, seafood, country music, Asian noodles, and the color black.

Madeline attended Great Bridge High School in Chesapeake, Virginia before attending and graduating from Little Elm High School, in Little Elm, Texas, in 2015. In 2018, Madeline graduated from Sterling Health Center’s massage therapy program in Dallas, Texas. Thereafter, Madeline worked on hundreds of patients in both Texas and Southwest Florida. Dedicated to long-term, meaningful healing, she specialized in sports and prenatal massage. While working on her patients, she would often say “just breathe” while making you

squirm under a knot she was releasing, and would candidly remind you that you had neglected your stretching homework for weeks. In 2025, Madeline lived her dream of moving to the country in Sequatchie, Tennessee, where she gardened, cooked, raised animals, and decorated her home to her heart's content on the backside of a quiet mountain in the Appalachian foothills.

Madeline's love for people was evident in everything she did and how she lived her life. There are no words that can adequately convey how deeply she will be missed.

Madeline is predeceased by her grandparents Barbara and Norman Reed, of Chesapeake, Virginia, her best friend, Kelly Valentine, and mentor and close friend, Stuart Bright.

Madeline leaves behind her parents, Kelli Jane Reed Craig and Stephen James Craig of Safety Harbor, Florida, and one sister, Katlyn Nicole Craig, of Sarasota, Florida.

Survivors also include grandparents Shirley Marshall, and James and Judy Craig; uncle Mark David Reed and his wife Ingrin; aunts Karen Craig, Lori Chenoweth and her husband Charlie, and Nancy Massey and her husband Mark; uncle David Craig and his wife Jennifer, uncle James Gillen and his wife Katherine; and aunt Rebecca Gillen; cousins David, Kelani and her husband Kenny, Nicholas and his wife Michelle, Amanda, Ian and his fiancé Kara, Courtney, and Leeann. Madeline also leaves behind first cousins who she loved like nieces and nephews: Alexia, Alana, Harmony, Olvia, Noah, Desi, Brantley, Quinn, Lennon, Cora, and Lily.

Lastly, Madeline leaves behind her animals or "children" as she affectionately called them: Buddy, Smoke, Ra, Chester, Henrietta, Mable, Ness, Melly,

Huayra (or “Y”), Maia, and a not-yet-named baby duckling.

A Celebration of Life will be held in Hampton Roads, Virginia at a later date; details and where donations can be made in lieu of flowers will be shared by Madeline’s family in the weeks ahead.