



Cozumel scuba diving accident kills 15-year-old boy

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COZUMEL, Mexico — Tyler Laas, an avid baseball player and soon-to-be sophomore at Bowie High School, died Aug. 16 while on vacation in Mexico.

Tyler Laas was on his third SCUBA dive when the 15-year-old motioned to his father and their guide that he was having trouble with his mask and was going up. Moments later, his father saw his son's mask was off and he was floating to the top. A last-days-of-summer family vacation in Cozumel had turned to tragedy.

The medical examiner ruled that Tyler, an avid baseball player and soon-to-be sophomore at Bowie High School, died Aug. 16 from asphyxiation due to a constricted trachea during immersion.

His funeral will be at 11 a.m. Saturday at Bethany Lutheran Church, 3701 W. Slaughter Lane, preceded by visitation at 10 a.m. A celebration of Tyler's life will take place immediately after the funeral at the church. Graveside services will follow at Austin Memorial Park Cemetery.

Tyler loved sports and while baseball was his first love he also played YMCA basketball and Austin United Soccer. He also enjoyed Theater Arts, Tango Club, Fifth Grade Volleyball Club and making silly home videos with his friends.

His family said many of the e-mails from friends and his coaches talk about how kind, friendly and positive Tyler was with everything he did. "We're finding out how very popular he was, judging from the amount of calls we've received," his father said.

Tyler Jordan Laas was born March 8, 1994, in Austin and is survived by his parents, Steve and Angie, sister Courtney, grandparents Ivan Johnson, Lois Bilbrough, David Everett, Walter Laas, Betty Cannady and Lewis Keith, and an aunt and uncle Amy and David Flanagan; along with many other family members and loving friends.



A life cut short by a fatal scuba diving accident in Cozumel Mexico: Tyler Laas, dead at age 15.

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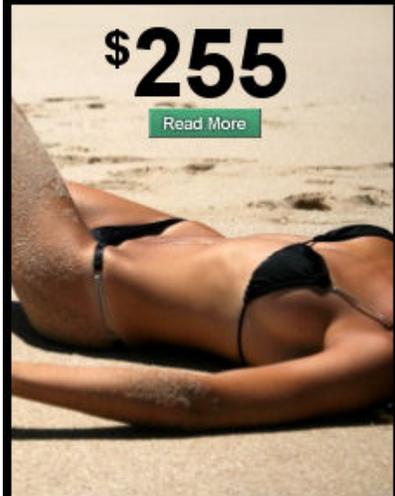
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His father said Tyler was very excited about this vacation and talked about it every day for the last couple of weeks. "We swam with dolphins during this trip, which was a long-time wish of his," he said.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Oak Hill Youth Sports Association, Bowie High School Baseball Booster Club, the Tyler Laas Memorial Scholarship Fund (donations accepted at any Bank of America branch) or the charity of your choice.

by Tony Tucci

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