



## Cherise L. Allison Etson

August 20, 1966 - December 17, 2025

Cherise Ladeema Allison Etson passed away on Wednesday December 17, 2025, at the age of 59. She was born on August 20, 1966, at McLaren Hospital in Flint, Michigan to Jacqueline Marie Ranger and Robert Allison.

Cherise lived in Flint for most of the first 39 years of her life, graduating with honors from Carmen High School in 1984. Her excellent achievements were “all the more” remarkable since Cherise was diagnosed with a rare endocrine disease in early childhood. As a result, she spent much of her young life either completing school assignments from home or being in the hospital having major surgeries for both Medullary Thyroid Cancer and (Adrenal Gland) Pheochromocytoma. From this early age, her family and friends marveled at her strong resilience, positive can-do attitude, vivacious personality, and zest for living, which would be key in carrying her through the rest of her life.

Around 1987, her Multiple Endocrine Neoplasia Type 2B (MEN2B) was rearing its ugly head, since the average lifespan at that time for this disease was only around 20 years of age. In Sacramento, California, where Cherise had been living at that time, her doctors warned her to “get her affairs in order because you do not have long.” Reluctantly, but still lovingly, giving up her new adult independence by going back to her mother’s arms in Michigan, Cherise reunited with her previous friend, Scott Nordman. She was later thrilled to discover she was pregnant with her first child. Cherise and Scott

parted ways, and other doctors told her, “You will never live to give birth to this child.” Cherise, however, made up her mind that “I don’t care what you say because I WILL give birth to this baby.”

On December 4, 1989, the gloriously gifted, handsome charmer, Christopher Robert Allison was born, and lived with both Cherise and her devoted mom, Christopher’s “Gram,” Jackie. Jointly raising Chris, Cherise knew that Jackie would always be there for her son (Jackie’s grandson) if Cherise’s own life was cut short – but she was determined to not let that be the case. She continued to live life to the fullest, remaining dedicated to Christopher, while going back to school and earning an Associate degree in Business from Mott Community College.

Battling an additional health episode, and all complications of MEN 2B, she had surgery for cervical cancer in 1995. With no doubt in her mind that she would get through this crisis immediately-unscathed as well, she began working as an assistant in a Vascular Medicine facility, making use of her education, her natural charm and likeability, and her compassion for other people.

Cherise continued to have health support from U of M Ann Arbor hospital, with all her doctors baffled and incredulous at her remarkable old age of 30, older than possibly any existing MEN 2B patient, from the “pool” of only about 2,000 worldwide with this, particular, lethal type of MEN, at that time. Attributing her longevity to her unbelievably strong, stubborn spirit, U of M begged Cherise and Jackie multiple times to give them permission to have Cherise’s body for research whenever the time came that her life finally ended.

When Jackie’s own health began deteriorating, Cherise took a “leave” from work to stay home and care for both her mother and son. In 2001, Cherise met David Etson, a relative of Jackie’s close friend, Judy Chapman, when

Judy brought Dave with her to come visit Jackie, Cherise, and Christopher. Dave quickly became enamored with the beautiful blond who was, as he admitted, “way out of my league,” and volunteered to help Cherise and Christopher, now age 12, with any assistance they needed to take care of Jackie until Jackie’s death in 2002.

Dave and Cherise then fell in love, and created their precious and beautiful daughter, the “Cherise clone,” Jacqueline Rosemary (Rosie) Etson, born on November 16, 2003. Prior to her birth, in utero, Rosie was tested for the presence of the RET gene mutation that causes MEN 2B, as medical science had then advanced to that level. Discovering that Rosie did, indeed, have the RET gene, plans were made with U of M to ensure that she had a thyroidectomy prior to the age of 1 year, to give Rosie the best chance for less devastating effects from her own MEN 2B, vs that of her mother.

Only a month after Rosie’s birth, Cherise and Dave found out they were going to have another child. Cherise decided it was time to make it official, and married Dave on May 8, 2004. Along with Cherise and Dave’s 25 closest family and friends, both Chris and Rosie attended the small wedding, and darling Rosie definitely “made her presence known.” Someone else attended as well, in his mother’s womb. On September 21 of that year, the amazing “heartthrob,” Jack David Etson, Cherise’s third “wonder child,” blessed us all by coming into the world.

Jack traveled with his parents and Great Aunt Suzie to U of M in 2004, where 11-month-old sister Rosie underwent her prophylactic thyroidectomy. When brought to recovery, she displayed her mother’s amazing spirit and strength by pulling herself up in her ICU crib and dancing as her anesthesia wore off, with Cherise and Aunt Suzie laughingly crying, “Rosie, don’t fall and hurt the incision in your neck!”

After living in Flint with their children for the first two years of their marriage, Cherise, Dave, and the children then spent the next 9 years living in the Tawas City, MI area. In 2015, after Cherise decided to end her marriage to Dave, Christopher and his lovely wife Allyssa Davis Allison, who had fallen in love after meeting at Tawas High School, generously invited Cherise, Rosie, and Jack to move to Farmington, MI and live with them. That same year, Cherise captured the heart and fascination of the wonderful man who would become the romantic love of her life, her near-perfect ideal, John Berger. After meeting online, John and Cherise's love quickly blossomed.

Cherise, Rosie, Jack, Chris and Allyssa lived together and loved and supported each other very effectively, which became paramount when Cherise suffered another unbelievable health incident in 2016. Experiencing severe chest pain while she, Rosie and Jack were at Wayne State University in Farmington Hills for Rosie's SAT's, Cherise and the two youngest children started home, where Jack was begging his mother in the car to call an ambulance. When she wouldn't listen, after arriving home, Rosie had the foresight to give her mom a baby aspirin, and to then plead and finally convince Cherise to call Chris home from work and go to the hospital.

Cherise had suffered a massive heart attack and began again fighting for her life. Improving faster than doctors thought possible, Cherise told her panicked little Rosie, "you saved my life." Eventually released from the hospital on blood thinners, with warnings to be extremely careful not to bump her head, Cherise of course did just that. She experienced a major "brain bleed" and medical staff insisted she would likely not survive. As was the story of her life, Cherise insisted, "shut up; yes, I will."

After successfully returning home, Cherise and her "closest" family and friends again celebrated; this time, at the birth, on June 30, 2016, of her second amazing, adorable, and beautiful grandchild, Izabella Grace Allison. "Bella"

was instantly loved, and provided healing for the entire family, since Chris and Allyssa had previously (2014) experienced the heartbreaking loss of Cherise's premature, one-day-old, first precious grandchild, Dmitri Marvel Allison. Two months after Bella's birth in 2016, the same loved ones celebrated Cherise's 50th birthday. Her doctors at U of M continued to ask, "How is this possible? Something in this woman's body and spirit allows her to reach the summit of insurmountable peaks 'over and over again.' Hopefully, she will allow us to study her and find out 'how,' at some time in the inevitable future."

Cherise's brilliant and "like-his-Daddy-charismatic-and-handsome" third grandchild and "Tine"(Valentine), Lance Christopher Allison, was born on February 14, 2018. Consistent with her endless love and huge, although failing, heart, Cherise took care of her two grandbabies for their entire lives to-date, while their parents both worked full-time. She was a devoted and beyond wonderful grandmother to Bella and Lance, who brought joy into her life each and every day.

During the final years of her life's journey, Cherise continued to experience multiple existing and new health problems, but seemed to battle them, as she always had, by setting a single goal for herself at any given point in time. She would announce, "To hell with what these doctors say, I can't be sick because I have to get through giving birth to this baby, I can't be sick because I have to get through infant Rosie having this thyroid surgery, I can't be sick because Bella and Lance are both stars in this school event, ...because Jack needs me for his heart ablation...because I have to raise my two youngest children to adulthood so that I know they will be ok, because I have to..."

About four months ago, her "closest" family and friends all experienced her final declaration of "I can't be sick because...", with none of us knowing it was, indeed, the final milestone Cherise would set for herself. Sometime before August 29, 2025, Cherise announced, "I can't be sick because I have to see

Rosie through her surgery and recovery” for Rosie’s own extremely serious, pheochromocytoma surgery at U of M, Ann Arbor.

Cherise used her own vast knowledge and personal experience of all-things MEN 2B to meet with Rosie and her U of M surgeon and convince him that he could, indeed, succeed in giving Rosie a ground-breaking surgery where both adrenal glands were saved, and only the “pheo” tumors were removed. In this way, because medical science has come so far, Rosie would not be steroid dependent, as her mother had been since Cherise was only 12 years old.

Cherise texted back and forth with the surgeon’s team from the U of M Mott Children’s Hospital waiting room on August 29, as Rosie underwent an impossibly delicate surgery. The surgeon kept commenting, “As you know, I was only planning on addressing Rosie’s left adrenal gland today, as her scan showed that the left was the most severely diseased. I was only going to “look at” the right gland to see what the future might hold for us. Additionally, for the left gland, I was planning on determining today if I would be able to save a portion of it, or if I would need to completely remove it. As it turns out, the left gland is, of course, diseased, but the right gland is actually the more severely diseased of the two. I’m not confident now that I can partially save either adrenal gland.”

Cherise forcefully texted back, “Yes you can because you are talented and brilliant and my daughter needs you to.” The surgical team texted back that both glands had precarious positioning alongside other major vessels and organs, making it very dangerous for the surgeon to do a large amount of manipulation. Cherise texted back, “Of course that’s a major issue, but you WILL be successful, because you have to try to save both glands for my daughter. Stop being scared and losing your self-confidence. I have faith in you to do it.”

There was overwhelming joy, excitement, and tremendous relief for Cherise and her loved ones several hours later when the surgeon proudly told them he was able to do everything Cherise had asked. They had effectively given Rosie a great chance for a long and far more medically positive future than Cherise was ever able to have.

Our beloved Cherise is finally at peace now, after telling her loyal and devoted love and caretaker, John, that there was nothing else she “just had to get through.” She said she knew that Chris and Allyssa would take care of Bella and Lance, and that they would be the ones to get her precious granddaughter through Bella’s own serious medical journey. She knew it because Chris is such a wonderful, loving, hands-on father, and Allyssa is so extremely smart, remarkable, and able to get the impossible to happen from doing whatever it takes. She knew that Jack is now a man, with so many friends who love him and will be by his side, and that he will live to do and achieve whatever he wants to. She knew that Rosie, who calls her mother her “ride or die,” and whose extremely rare history appears in medical journals alongside the history of her mother, will continue her life journey with her wonderful fiancé, Jordan, by her side, taking care of her.

Cherise wants us all to rejoice for her and help her achieve her final wish for her body to go to medical science at either U of M or some other renowned research institution, such as Wayne State University, which is associated with Cherise’s heart failure Cardiologist at Henry Ford Hospital. She wants it so that medical professionals can make life far better for Rosie and others. We promised her we would do that. Rest in peace, Cherise.

Note 1: Christopher has setup a GoFundMe campaign to assist in Cherise’s final expenses, including those resulting from her wish to donate her body to

medical science. The campaign will also assist with throwing the “big party” Cherise wanted to have, in lieu of a traditional memorial, with as many of her network of family and friends as possible. That celebration of her life will be announced at a later date, but will likely be held in Summer 2026.

<https://gofund.me/7681d05d6>

Note 2: University of Michigan was unable to accept Cherise’s body donation because of a perfect storm of unforeseen circumstances. The family has been scrambling since almost the moment of her death to try and figure out the current body donation process, as time is of the essence. Chris’ wife, Allyssa, was miraculously able to convince Wayne State University to accept her body, so Cherise is finishing her travel along the long, complicated maze we have found to be necessary for her to get there.

Final Note 3: This one is specifically from Cherise's Aunt Suzie. Cherise truly loved all of her far-reaching network of blood-related and non-blood related family and friends, even though she did not ask the great majority to be physically present as she went through her key life events. Her network is vast, too, as she inherited the personality of her grandfather, Francis (Frank) Ranger, to whom even strangers were immediately drawn.

She also did not previously share the intricate details of her own, and her immediate family's, health with the great majority of you, because she was a private person in that one regard. She continually said she did not want people to always think only about her being sick, but to instead think about her glass-half-full outlook and fun loving personality.

Now, however, she wants us to share this detailed information with all of you.

We know it is a long, hard-to-read obituary, and we apologize for that, because we think it is also a fascinating story. If you kindly choose to respond in any way to the GoFundMe campaign that Christopher has set up to cover Cherise's final expenses and wishes, I ask that you also consider helping her children as they move forward in life without their beloved mother.

You have all read about Rosie's already-difficult journey, which we all know will continue to be difficult. Jack faces a scary, unknown journey as well, and has no idea how he will actually do it without his mom being physically by his side.

Christopher always has, and still does display a fun exterior demeanor, but is terrified internally at what lies ahead for himself, Allyssa, and their children. Their seriously ill daughter, Bella, has an also-rare medical condition, where she continues to have devastating seizures that are steadily destroying the part of her brain that controls her memory. Her devoted little brother, Lance constantly looks out for her, and is heartbroken each time he sees her go through the things she experiences. Now, he and his sister are both also heartbroken at the loss of their Grandma and why she is no longer there with their beloved "Grandpa" John.

Chris and Allyssa are quickly becoming financially devastated, even though both are extremely hard-working optimists. They will do everything and give up everything to take care of their daughter, no matter what. Both Cherise's and my own heart are already breaking because of what is happening to Bella. The heartbreak will be even greater if Chris' young family also continues to suffer from what is happening to them financially.

I know that all of you may have tough lives and stretched-thin financial issues of your own. I only ask that, in addition to you all sharing your love for Cherise with her kids, those of you who can, also share whatever monetary amount

you are able to share with them.

From the bottom of my heart, thank you for being there.

<https://gofund.me/7681d05d6>

# Tribute Wall

LF

“ Cherise will always be remembered for her indomitable spirit, her beautiful smile, and her love and devotion to friends and family. This was a wonderful tribute to her and her amazing life. Love and prayers for the family.



Lisa LaClair Fiddie - December 22, 2025 at 06:00 AM

MB

“ I Love you Cherie I have been telling you I was coming to visit well I will b there. I love you Maria, and all the crew at Fairlane.

maria bracey - December 22, 2025 at 12:06 AM

TO

“ I love you so much! I'm so lucky to have had you as my aunt in my life. Your are Forever in my heart ❤️ thank you for all your advice over the years. You will be so missed!

Toran - December 20, 2025 at 08:51 PM

PE

“ I will miss you forever sistah !!!! Love you all I will Pray for you all ! Pam

Pam Etson - December 20, 2025 at 05:17 PM

CS

“ Love you all so much! Party crashing will not be the same without you butt.

Chaya Safran - December 20, 2025 at 02:06 PM