



Kathy Kopelousos

November 2, 1962 - August 7, 2024

Kathy Kopelousos watched her last sunset on Wednesday, August 7th, 2024, peacefully on her deck overlooking the river. She succumbed to a six-year, hard-fought battle with endometrial cancer.

Born in Gainesville, FL, on November 2, 1962, Kathy's love for life and family was evident in everything she did. A proud Gator, she attended the University of Florida from 1980 to 1983, and her devotion to her alma mater never waned. Her Gator flag flew high during college football season, and her fall parties for the Florida-Georgia game were legendary.

Kathy later moved to Illinois, where she obtained both her Bachelor of Arts and Master of Science degrees from Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville. She dedicated over two decades to teaching as a math professor at Lewis and Clark Community College in Godfrey, IL, from 1996 until her retirement in 2018. Her passion for teaching and her students was matched only by the joy she found in her family and friends. Kathy remained in Illinois after retirement, enjoying the amazing friendships and connections she had developed over the years in the area.

Kathy's life was rich with love and connection. She was the ultimate big sister to her five siblings and an amazing aunt to all of her nieces and nephews, always sending care packages or super cute, hand crafted, home made cards for special occasions—or just because. Her love for poker led her to start the cherished tradition of “family poker – no pennies on the table” at every gathering. Her local poker family was an immense support during her battle

with cancer, and no matter how tough her day was, she always rallied for her weekly games.

Anna Maria Island, Florida, held a special place in Kathy's heart. She spent countless hours walking the beach in search of elusive shark's teeth that seemed to magically appear for only Kathy, enjoying a burger at Duffy's Tavern, or challenging locals to poker at Decoy Ducks. These simple pleasures defined the essence of who Kathy was—a lover of life's small joys, shared with those she cared about.

Kathy is survived by her mother, Mary Katherine Wainwright of Sarasota, FL; her father and stepmother, John and Ann Kopelousos of Jacksonville, FL; her sisters Angela Black (husband Bill), Georgia Kopelousos, and Mary Margaret Estill (husband Robert); her brothers G. John Kopelousos (wife Shannon) and Leslie Alderman (wife Ghita); and her beloved nieces and nephews—George, John, Anna, Caroline, Ellie, and Nina. Kathy also had a special bond with Ashtyn Britt, of whom she was very fond.

Kathy's legacy is one of love, generosity, and resilience. She will be deeply missed by her family, friends, and all who had the privilege of knowing her. A Celebration of Life will be planned for a later date in honor of Kathy and all that knew her will be invited to attend.

As much as Kathy loved flowers and cards, we know she would be smiling down if you would simply make a donation to a cause that was near and dear to her heart. The St. Louis Peregrine Society is dedicated to improving the life of cancer patients living in the greater St. Louis area. <https://peregrinesoc.org/donation/>

Gent Funeral Home in Alton, IL is in charge of arrangements. Online guestbook and information may be found at www.gentfuneralhome.com

Tribute Wall

CN

“ I just heard of Kathy’s passing
I married and moved out of the area and lost contact with her
She has been heavy on my heart so I reached out to a mutual friend
I’m so heartbroken
Kathy and I baked cookies at Christmas to pass out as gifts , tried
step aerobics but laughed at ourselves most of the class and so
many memories
Fly high my friend fly high ❤️❤️❤️❤️❤️❤️❤️

Christy niemeyer - February 21, 2025 at 01:18 PM

LA

“ May Kathy rest, free from worldly burdens. My heart goes out to
Kathy & her family. I have so many early childhood memories of
Kathy in Fleming Island as she would babysit me with so much care
& patience. I especially remember her playing Barbie dolls with me.
She brought the dolls to life with funny stories & roll playing. I will
always remember her warmth & humor. Praying for peaceful hearts
& healing love.

Louisa Agresti - August 15, 2024 at 11:08 PM

VJ

“ A beautiful tribute for a beautiful person who will be missed so very
much.
Love and prayers to each of you,
Virginia Jean

Virginia D Johns - August 15, 2024 at 04:59 PM

JA

“ So many great memories Kentucky Derby 13 straight years from 1988 🍷 Great sense of humor always ready for date night or great adventure. Her smile would light up a room and her poker face would make you fold 😂 I have so many great memories and stories that Kathy was part of that will live on 🌹🌹. Love you always Jay



Jay - August 15, 2024 at 04:22 PM



“ *Kathy and I were introduced by our mutual friend and her neighbor, Mary Lilisve. Our friendship was built over shared moments, particularly our love for good bourbon. I have a group of friends in Key West who share an appreciation for bourbon and cigars, and I would occasionally bring a bottle to Grafton to enjoy with Kathy. Over these drinks, we’d delve into conversations about life.*

One memorable topic was the stereotype that Asians are inherently good at math. I confessed to Kathy that I had always struggled with math, which she found hard to believe. When I challenged her to teach me some math theory, she chose the Fibonacci sequence. Kathy had a way of explaining things that made even intricate concepts clear to me, and I grasped it almost immediately. On another occasion, she introduced me to Probability theory and algorithms. At my age, well into my 70s, one might think learning math would be inconsequential, but it was quite the opposite. For my entire life, I had believed I was incapable when it came to numbers. I thought I was really stupid at math. I never considered that perhaps I just had poor math teachers in my youth. Kathy changed that for me.

Our conversations were always rich and meaningful, but it's our bourbon and math conversations that I will cherish the most. I'll miss you dearly, Kathy, but I find comfort in knowing that your pain and suffering have come to an end.

Gary Ujifusa - August 15, 2024 at 03:55 PM



“ *To my dear friend, Angela, and her Bill, George and John, and to Kathy’s whole family... Though I only met Kathy a handful of times, I saw the fierce love you all shared. She was a light. May her memory always be a blessing.*

Marci & Andy Vitkus - August 15, 2024 at 03:36 PM