



## Kristine Smith Baltus

September 1, 1948 - September 2, 2022

Kristine S. Baltus died at sunrise on Sept. 2, 2022, in Asheville, N.C., surrounded by her immediate family and following a two-month battle with an aggressive form of leukemia. The day also marked her 50th wedding anniversary. She was 74.

Born Kristine Carol Smith on Sept. 1, 1948, in Milwaukee, to parents Rita (Roettgers) Smith and Walter Ivan Smith, Kristine was a voracious lifelong reader and exceptional cook whose vibrant mind, quick wit, and sparkling smile drew people to her throughout her life. Her independence and intellect were an inspiration to many, particularly her children. To everyone who knew her, she was a force.

After graduating from Brookfield East High School in 1966, Kristine attended the University of Wisconsin – Madison, where she earned her BA in Scandinavian Studies. Her appetite for exploring the world then led her to Oslo, Norway, for a year, during which time she traveled extensively through Europe. Kristine returned to Wisconsin in 1971, reconnecting with Dennis Baltus, an old high school and parochial school classmate who became her husband.

Together Kristine and Dennis lived in La Crosse, Wis., and Pittsburgh, Penn., before buying their first house in Wauwatosa, Wis. They welcomed a

daughter, Leah, in 1978, then moved to West Bloomfield, Mich., in 1980 when Dennis accepted a job opportunity in the Detroit area. Knowing no one there, Kristine set about building a home, welcoming her son, Michael, in 1983. Over nearly 40 years on Old Carriage Lane, she created a home that reflected both her excellent taste and her love of art and gardening. She formed extraordinary friendships with neighbors who became family, and her house was often the center of activity on the block, filled with the comings and goings of children and friends. Her Christmas parties were the stuff of legend.

After Dennis retired in 2017, he and Kristine moved to Asheville, a place they chose for its mountains, quirky character, food scene, and proximity to Michael and his family. She once again manifested a beautiful home and immersed herself in the local community through book clubs and the neighborhood social committee. In just four years, she formed deep bonds with new friends, all of whom helped make the last years of her life some of the happiest.

Kristine is survived by her husband Dennis Baltus, daughter Leah Baltus (Jason Justice), son Michael Baltus (Katey Rich Baltus), grandsons Charlie and Sam Baltus, brother Michael Smith (Kathy Smith), nephews Eric and Evan Smith, and many close friends near and far.

Anyone who wishes to make a donation in Kristine's honor is encouraged to give to the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society or Literacy Together, an Asheville organization that provides literacy services to children and adults. A memorial service will be held on Sept. 10 from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. at the Pavilion in Thoms Estate.

# Previous Events

## Memorial Service

SEP **10**. 2:00 PM - 5:00 PM (ET)

The Pavilion at Thoms Estate  
5 Orly Lane  
Asheville, NC 28804

# Tribute Wall



“ *Kristine Smith Baltus*

October 07, 2023 at 11:15 AM



“ *Words are never enough at a time like this, know that we have memories of Kristine in our hearts. Prayers for the family always. Love John and Sandy Justice*

**John and Sandy Justice** - September 10, 2022 at 08:58 AM



“ *We had the good fortune to live next door to Kristine and Dennis for some 10 years. We watched Leah and Michael grow into young adults. Our house was their house and vice versa. We remember the great Christmas parties Kristine threw every year, the summer pool parties, and simply sitting around the pool having a drink and talking about families. There was the summer party with the suckling pig stuffed with chickens stuffed with sausage that roasted on the huge rented BBQ all afternoon while we enjoyed cool drinks and warm conversations. There was the time we returned from the block party across the street, having had several drinks and jumped in the pool for a midnight swim. Beverlee forgot about the chlorine in the water and found her blond hair had a slight greenish tint in the morning. There are good memories from when Kristine and Dennis joined us for a couple of weeks at our place on Great Harbour Cay in the Bahamas. And most important, Kristine and Dennis stood up for us at our wedding. Kristine filled our lives with a lifetime of good memories and love. Kristine , you are missed but forever with us.*

*Ken & Beverlee Chick*

**Ken & Bev Chick** - September 08, 2022 at 02:42 PM

NR

*Ken and Bev, We share many of those memories of Kristine! We will miss her!*

**NANCY H REED** - September 10, 2022 at 03:24 PM

SD

“ *Susan and Frank Devine purchased the Joyful Memory for the family of Kristine Smith Baltus.*



**Susan and Frank Devine** - September 08, 2022 at 11:11 AM

BS

“ *My sincere sympathy to the family. Kristine was such a great organizer and an asset to the Thoms Estate community giving her many talents and sharing her time.*

*Becky Smith*

**Becky Smith** - September 07, 2022 at 01:47 PM



“ *Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Kristine Smith Baltus.*



September 07, 2022 at 12:20 PM

MA

“ *Madeline sent a virtual gift in memory of  
Kristine Smith Baltus*



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**Madeline** - September 07, 2022 at 09:27 AM

MA

*Thank you for the sunshine you brought into our lives!*

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**Madeline** - September 07, 2022 at 09:30 AM

KE

“ *A life well lived - we will miss your smiling  
face! Kelly & Larry*



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**Kelly** - September 07, 2022 at 08:10 AM



“ *Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of  
Kristine Smith Baltus.*



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September 06, 2022 at 09:29 PM