



Kathryn Siepak

August 27, 1962 - July 20, 2017

Kathy was born August 27, 1962, in Pensacola, Florida, to Mitchell S. and Julia R. Siepak. In her childhood, she lived in Pensacola; Charlotte, NC; Bethany, OK; and Greensboro, NC. She graduated from Grimsley Sr. High, where she made lifelong friends in the Playmasters drama club. After high school, she lived a year in Manteo, NC, before attending Western Carolina University. In 1984, she graduated with an A.A.S. degree in Alternate Energy Technology from Southwestern Technical College in Sylva, NC.

With her degree, Kathy worked installing solar energy systems in Greensboro, NC, several years before moving to Terlingua, TX. In Terlingua, Kathy held several different jobs, such as raft guide/cook, an experience that let her explore the mountainous regions of northern Mexico.

In 1991, Kathy graduated from the University of Texas, El Paso, with a B.S. degree in Elementary and Early Childhood Education. She used her degree in Terlingua, where she taught preschool and kindergarten in an English as a Second Language classroom. She had a special gift with little children and quickly became a beloved teacher in the community. She taught in Terlingua for seven years.

Kathy returned to Greensboro, NC, in 1998. Her daughter, Megan Celeste Siepak, was born that year, and Kathy opened Blue Sky Child Care, an in-home, 5-star licensed day care for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. Blue Sky let her take care of her own daughter while she worked, and she forged more friendships with clients whose children she taught. She ran Blue Sky

three years before enrolling at the University of North Carolina, Greensboro, to pursue a doctoral degree.

In 2001, Kathy became a Research Assistant at UNC-G, then a Professional Development Liason before earning her M.S. degree in Human Development and Family Studies. She earned her Ph.D. in the same program at UNC-G in 2008. Her dissertation was titled Longitudinal Influences of Maternal Sensitivity on Infant Temperamental Reactivity and Emotion Regulation.

After graduating, Kathy became an Assistant Professor of Early Childhood Education at the University of Texas of the Permian Basin in Odessa, TX. In this position, she authored and was awarded numerous grant proposals. One of these helped her create and implement the Texas Home Visiting Program for parents of infants and young children. The program gives parents of infants and preschoolers information and structured activities to help them gain skills as parents. (See http://www.oaoa.com/news/education/utpb/article_344945be-7d09-11e2-a36c-0019bb30f31a.html for an article on this.)

Kathy then returned to teaching young children in the public schools in Odessa before she became an Associate Director/Education Manager at Greater Opportunities of the Permian Basin (Head Start). In this position, Kathy traveled throughout West Texas, training teachers and helping parents of young children.

In Odessa, Kathy was unable to practice her Quaker faith in a formal community, so she joined the Unitarian Universalist Church of Odessa, TX. There, she found a community that embraced her and her daughter unconditionally.

Kathy died peacefully in her home with her sister at her side on July 20, 2017. Her enthusiasm for life, generosity, creativity, dry humor, and fierce loyalty will be missed by her family and the many friends she has across the country.

Kathy is survived by her daughter, Megan Celeste Siepak; her parents, Mitchell S. Siepak and Julia R. Siepak of Greensboro, NC; her brother, Mark S. (Lisa) Siepak of High Point, NC; her sister, Karen Lee (Joe) Boardman of Boulder, CO; and her nephews, Derek L. Siepak of High Point, NC, and Elijah

N. Boardman of Boulder, CO.

A memorial service will be held in Odessa, TX, on Sunday, July 30, and in Greensboro, NC, date TBD.

Tribute Wall

KB

“ I miss my sister so.

Karen Lee Siepak Boardman - February 22, 2018 at 06:41 AM

DL

“ I still find myself reaching for the phone to tell her something funny, or to rant and rave about something. I have all the little gifts from her scattered around my house. Miss you, Kat!

Denise Long - December 30, 2017 at 04:26 PM

DC

“ Kathy was one of the kindest people I've ever known. I was lucky to live in Terlingua with her. Rest in peace Sweet Friend.

Danielle Corrick - August 08, 2017 at 04:25 PM

RJ

“ Wilderness Club would not have been the same without her. Snipe hunting, smores and getting snow-bound in the mountains. Kathy was a part of some very fond memories for me. My condolences to her family.

Roch Smith, Jr. - August 06, 2017 at 05:20 PM

MH

“ I wish I had known Kathy. Reading about her, we have lost a very special soul. My condolences to her daughter, sister, extended family and friends. A great loss. Peace.

Mary G Hagan - August 06, 2017 at 02:32 PM

NS

“ I remember the very sweet and kind Kathy from Grimsley High School even though we did not have classes together. We managed to see each other all the time and spend time together. She was a very special person that was well loved by all. She will be sorely missed. But she is soaring with the Angels now. My condolences to the family and I send my love to all of you. You will be in my prayers.



Once upon a time an angel held my hand,
She wiped away my tears and helped me understand.
Our time on earth is brief, there's lessons to be learned,
Each precious day God gives us another page is turned.
Every chapter full of memories, times of joy and tears,
Triumphs and defeats, through every passing year.
She loved us unconditionally, always by our side,
When no one else would listen, in her we could confide.
With gentle words of wisdom she led us on our way,
Down the paths of righteousness if ever we did stray.
She saw the light in everyone and gave with no regrets,
Always from her heart let's not forget.
Angels come in many forms, for me it is my mother,
With love I cannot say in words there'll never be another.
Every day I turn the page in my heart will ever remain,
Everything she taught me as I stroll down memory lane.
Thank you God for giving me the most priceless of all treasures,
Help my Lord to keep alive her memory here forever.
I pray that I can some day be everything she hoped I would,
That's she smiling down from heaven knowing she did good.
As we gather here today there's no ending to her story,
Another chapter has begun full of grace and glory.
God's called her to his heavenly home, part of his great plan,
Although it may be hard, we all must understand.
Faith is what is hoped for, things we cannot see,
Heaven is promised to all of us if only we believe.

In memory of Shirley A Fowler

Norma Sarazin - August 06, 2017 at 10:09 AM

NS

“ *Norma Sarazin sent a virtual gift in memory of Kathryn Siepak*



Norma Sarazin - August 06, 2017 at 10:00 AM

AP

“ *I will cherish the memories of our friendship forever. The things we said, the things we did, the things each of us shared with the other, trying to encourage ourselves to be the best "us"es we could be. And the hugs. Kat's hugs had magical powers.*

Anita Pratto - August 06, 2017 at 09:00 AM

LH

“ *I attended Grimsley High School with Kat and have fond memories of her kindness and wit. My condolences to all of her loved ones, friends and family.*

Lynn Holt-Campbell - August 06, 2017 at 08:51 AM

CW

“ Dr. Kathryn Siepak was an amazing soul! I loved her always high energy coupled with her qwerky wit. Her dedication to Early Childhood was untiring and many great things were birthed in our community via that dedication. At GOPB she pioneered the implementation of a rigorous and highly effective Professional Development program that continues to be a foundation for the program. She has been and will continue to be missed greatly. Blessings to her daughter and family whom she loved very much.

Catriva Webbs

Catriva Webbs - July 30, 2017 at 08:03 PM

SA

“ I am very saddened by the passing of Dr. Siepak.
It was an honor to affiliate with her regarding Early Childhood Education.
God Bless her daughter and family!
Sincerely,
Sandy Arneson



Sandy Arneson - July 26, 2017 at 07:03 PM



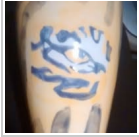
“ Kathy was and always will be the birth mother of First 5 Permian Basin. Her passion for young children will live on in our community for generations. I will miss you my friend. Beth Meyerson Sterkel

Beth Meyerson - July 26, 2017 at 06:55 AM

AP

“ Kathy was an amazing woman. I am so glad that she was in my life even for a little while.

April - July 25, 2017 at 04:35 PM



“ *We have lost a truly beautiful soul. Prayers to her family.*

Gene Powell - July 25, 2017 at 04:11 PM