



Susan Allen Huff

January 2, 1967 - June 26, 2015

Susan Allen Huff (born Susan Elizabeth Allen) slipped comfortably into death on June 26, 2015 at her home in Grandview Heights, Ohio. She was surrounded by family and friends throughout her final days, weeks and hours. She had metastatic breast cancer and was 48 years old.

She was born January 2, 1967 in New London, Connecticut. The daughter of then U.S. Naval lieutenant James Frederick Allen and Ursula (Kindling) Allen, Susan grew up in a variety of locations across the Eastern United States.

During her high school years she lived in Granville, Ohio and attended the Columbus School for Girls, where her mother taught elementary school. A graduate of the class of 1984, she matriculated to The College of Wooster in Wooster, Ohio. She majored in psychology and earned a bachelors degree of the arts in 1988.

Two years later, after a stint in Boston working for a paper company, she returned to central Ohio and began graduate studies in social work at The Ohio State University.

In the first year of that degree she was engaged to Steven R. Huff of Granville, whom she had known since high school. They were married August 17, 1991 at Granville Baptist Church. Susan then relocated to Norfolk, Virginia, where

Steve was entering his final year of medical school. She completed her Masters of Social Work at Norfolk State University.

Upon earning their degrees in the summer of 1993, Susan and Steve moved to Lancaster, Pennsylvania, where Steve enrolled in family practice residency. Susan found employment with the department of child services as a counselor for sexually abused children. In the summer of 1993 she gave birth to their first child Margaret (Maggie).

After Steve completed his residency training in the summer of 1995, the family moved to Stuart, Virginia, where Steve became a rural family physician. When Susan felt comfortable leaving Maggie with a sitter, she resumed employment as a social worker in the rehabilitation wing of the local hospital, then known as RJR Patrick County Memorial Hospital (now Pioneer Hospital).

In the winter of 1998 she gave birth to her second child, Jay. She remained at home with him for several years and then took a series of jobs at Patrick County High School. Her responsibilities included preparing students for college, helping them select a college, administering standardized tests and assisting families with funding.

In addition, she volunteered countless hours as a jack-of-all-trades for the Christmas Cheer Foundation in Patrick County. This organization, which blossomed under her watch, provided Christmas gifts to children whose families could not afford them.

Rural life in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains suited Susan well. She loved the idyllic countryside, the quiet pace of life, the safety and wholesomeness of raising children there, the kindness of the people, and the ability to pursue her lifelong love of horses.

She became fast, deep friends with a core group of horse riders, who rode both for pleasure and in competitive events. A rainbow of ribbons festooned the closet where she kept her tack. The day was not complete without at least a brief ride, preferably with friends.

In addition to horses she kept a constant assortment of dogs and cats around the house. She had uncanny veterinarian instincts, and often could predict (or correct) the actions of veterinarians. She had encyclopedic knowledge of dog, cat and horse breeds, and their histories. Upon request she could provide obscure information about lizards, cheetahs, dolphins—most any type of animal.

Her favorite breed of animal, however, was humans: Friends and family always came first, often before herself. She was immediately loveable to anyone she met. Her broad smile and dry wit were contagious. She was fiercely loyal and would stand up for anyone she loved. She developed a special motherly bond with her children, who always looked to her for comfort and non-judgmental advice. Her husband credits her with cracking his emotional shell and showing him how to listen.

Susan was thrilled when her parents Jim and Ursula built a house next door and moved in. She loved family dinners there, preceded with hors d'oeuvres and chatter, washed down with a glass of wine, followed by a game of Euchre, accompanied by old style country music and lively, rambling discussion.

With Jim's and Ursula's broad support, the extended family enjoyed three trips overseas, to France, Germany and Spain. These trips were aimed partly at pleasure, but with an emphasis on culture and the arts. Susan always made sure we had a meaningful agenda for the day, and kept everyone from lounging around.

In the spring of 2008 Susan was diagnosed with breast cancer. She underwent surgery without chemotherapy or radiation. She remained in remission until the Fall of 2013, when she developed metastases to her liver. These were well managed with chemotherapy until her cancer spread unexpectedly to the brain in April 2015. Thereafter she steadily declined.

Throughout her battle she remained brave, sweet, and accepting. She was surrounded at all times by her family and dearest friends. Her most common words were "Thank you" and "I love you." She spent her final days and weeks in the comfort of her own home and bed. In her final days she raised her weary arms for hugs and apologized for "not being better company." She died peacefully in her sleep, surrounded with love from those who meant the most to her.

A journal of her final weeks with photos and comments can be found at CaringBridge.org. Search for Susan Huff.

Here is a partial list of surviving people who remained closest to Susan over the years:

Family:

Steve Huff, husband

Maggie Huff, daughter

Jay Huff, son

Ursula (Kindling) Allen, mother

Jim Allen, father

Mike Allen, brother

Lisa Martinez, sister-in-law

Joseph Allen, brother

George and Charlie Allen, nephews
Sandy Huff, mother-in-law
Deborah Mansfield, sister-in-law
Kathy Huff Cunningham, stepmother-in-law

Friends:

Bruce and Tracy Wilhelm
Ed and Amy Kraus
Craig and Amy Berman
Denise and Joe Clark
Peggy and Mike McCutchen
Candy and Bernard Hylton
Wendy Rudd
Nancy Carlson and Ralph Kramer
Sandy (Tipton) Roberts
Helen (McSweeney) Corley
Lucy (Peden) Taylor
Leah Pusecker-Reynolds

...And a prohibitively long list of cousins, aunts, uncles, relatives, friends, colleagues and acquaintances that Susan would be appalled were not included. Sincere apologies.

Predeceased:

Paul and Marianne Kindling, maternal grandparents
Fred and Agnes Allen, paternal grandparents.
Ronald Huff, father in law

There will be two memorial services, better described as "Celebrations of Life." The first will be held in Columbus, Ohio at the Franklin Park

Conservatory on Saturday, July 11, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. All are invited.

A second celebration will take place in Patrick County, Virginia. The details will be posted when available.

In lieu of flowers or other gifts, please send a donation by personal check to The Stuart Rotary Student Loan and Scholarship Foundation, and specify the Susan Allen Huff/Fred Allen Memorial Scholarship at the bottom of the check. Mail it to Judy Lacks, Treasurer, Stuart Rotary, P.O. Box 723, Stuart, Virginia 24171. Thank you.

Tribute Wall

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“ Susan was a beautiful person, I'm so sorry to hear this. I have a mutual friend of John Maier who told me the news. You are all in my prayers. The yulogy perfectly describes my visit to Steve and Susan's in Virginia , she was a great hostess,I enjoyed a phenomonal dinner at her parents home, having good wine and conversation, playing rock star with Maggie and Jay, and a visit to the barn and horse ride. My heart aches for you all. With love and sympathy, Sandy Cummings-Huff

Sandy Huff - September 07, 2015 at 10:08 AM