



## Kathy J. Cartwright (McDonald)

November 6, 1951 - August 12, 2016

Kathryn J. Cartwright was released from this life on Friday August 12, 2016. She was born in Chicago, Illinois on November 6, 1951 to Frank and Patricia (Jacques) Cartwright. Kathy grew up in Homewood, IL and graduated from Homewood Flossmoor High School in 1969. She attended the University of Northern Illinois where she received a B.S. in Biology in 1976.

Her love of native wildflowers and other plants is something she carried with her throughout her life. Kathy went on to attend the University of Iowa where she received a M.S. in Environmental Engineering in 1980. It's there she met and fell in love with her future husband Joseph McDonald of Albia, Iowa, a fellow student and bicycling enthusiast at U of I.

They lived briefly in Minneapolis, MN where Kathy worked for the Cooperative Power Association. Then they moved to Madison, WI where Kathy worked for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and made several longtime friends. Kathy went on to pursue additional studies at the University of Wisconsin where she also taught and worked at the UW Arboretum. She subsequently worked for several environmental engineering consulting firms. She ended her career working for over a decade with the Wisconsin Community Action Program where she assisted low income communities with sewer and water projects.

Kathy was a Master Gardener and freely shared her deep knowledge of plants and skill in gardening. She helped start the Community Gardening program in Cottage Grove, WI and volunteered considerable time with The Prairie Enthusiasts restoring native prairie areas. In her “free” time she liked to follow baseball (“Go Brewers”) and explore nature all across the country.

She is survived by her husband, Joseph McDonald; a brother, Frank Jr.; and several wonderful nieces and nephews.

Kathy was preceded in death by her mother, Patricia; who also died much too young from the frontotemporal dementia that claimed Kathy. She was also preceded in death by her father, Frank; and a sister, Audrey.

A visitation will be held at the Tharp Funeral Home in Albia, IA from 4 to 7 on Wednesday August 17, 2016.

A memorial service will be held at a future date in Madison, WI. Memorials, in lieu of flowers, may be made to the Alzheimer’s Association to aid in their efforts with a wide range of dementias; or to the Nature Conservancy to aid in their work preserving native habitats. Both were causes close to Kathy’s heart.

We would also like to express our gratitude to the staff of the Monroe Care facility where Kathy was well cared for during the final chapter of her life.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

AUG 17. 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Tharp Funeral Home  
116 Benton Ave.  
Albia, IA 52531  
(641) 932-3129  
<https://www.tharpfh.com/>

# Tribute Wall



“ *Kathy J. Cartwright (McDonald)*

January 30, 2023 at 05:06 AM



“ *Kathy J. Cartwright (McDonald)*

January 30, 2023 at 02:53 AM



“ *I worked with Kathy at Cooperative Power and stayed in touch with her and Joe since then. Kathy had a keen and often dry wit where you had to double check if there was a wink or not. Her smile would light up the room. She was very bright and yet unassuming but didn't suffer fools easily. She was kind, caring. I didn't see them much for last 10--15 years due to my being in Wash DC but stayed in touch through Joe. I have the deepest respect for him and his caring. May both of them be at peace now.*

**Eric Hans Bauman** - September 18, 2016 at 03:55 PM



“ *I met Kathy in 1999 while working at Wisconsin Community Action Program Association. She was an exceptionally intelligent and funny person. Kathy was always there to lend a hand whether at work or in my personal life. Many, many times she babysat my crazy cat when I went out of town!! I will miss her greatly....she left us way too soon.*

**Colleen Rainey** - August 20, 2016 at 02:57 PM



“ *Pretty Please was purchased for the family of Kathy J. Cartwright (McDonald).*



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August 17, 2016 at 08:34 AM



“ *Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Kathy J. Cartwright (McDonald).*



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August 16, 2016 at 03:09 PM



“ *Kathy was a dear friend to me and my whole family. We worked together for many years and had lots of good times. I think about her and miss her at work every single day. She left her mark here at WISCAP and with the many communities that she worked with over the years. Through her volunteer work Kathy also made a difference. There are many places and communities in Wisconsin that are better off because of Kathy's efforts. Rest in peace my friend!*

*Diana Austin*

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**Diana Austin** - August 16, 2016 at 12:07 PM