



Kitty Knecht

May 19, 1953 - March 8, 2026

Kitty Knecht (Mary Kathryn Knecht), 72, of Evanston, passed away March 8, 2026.

Born and raised in Glendale, Ohio, she was the first-born child of Raymond and Mary Knecht. Kitty attended Catholic schools and graduated from Mount Notre Dame of Cincinnati. She rebelled against the traditions of those institutions and forged a different path for herself. She received her undergraduate degree from Northwestern University in 1975 and her PhD in cognitive psychology from the University of California, Berkeley in 1982. While attending Berkeley, she met her future husband, Toby, a fellow graduate student. After graduation, she moved to Chicago's Rogers Park neighborhood to join Toby, who was then a faculty member at Loyola University Chicago. The couple soon married in July 1982. The Bay Area was always a home away from home for Kitty, with many life-long friends whom she frequently visited.

The couple relocated to Evanston in 1987, where they lived for 38 years, and raised their two children. Kitty was a caring and supportive mother in every way to her daughters Amanda and Caitlyn. She had the biggest heart; she was thoughtful and listened more than she talked.

Kitty held influential roles in marketing research for Quaker Oats Company for

13 years beginning in 1984. Afterward, she founded the consulting firm Knecht and Associates until she retired in 2017.

For 16 years Kitty served as Board Chair of Marketplace: Handiwork of India, a fair-trade non-profit organization increasing economic opportunities for women artisans of India through the marketing of their handiwork.

An activist and anti-authoritarian, Kitty volunteered in any way she could for Indivisible Evanston. Kitty joined Indivisible Evanston in 2017. An invaluable member, she served as a co-leader since 2022. Kitty was a tireless advocate for democracy. Her leadership, generosity, and courage helped shape Indivisible and the Evanston community.

Kitty had an enduring creative streak and a great sense for music. She had a beautiful singing voice, and as an undergraduate, performed in local coffee houses. A lifelong dancer, Kitty took multiple ballet classes, jazz, and tap each week right up until her death. Evanston School of Ballet and Dance Center Evanston were close to her heart. She was also a talented gardener, with an excellent eye for which flowering plants went well together.

She loved animals and doted on her flock of cats.

Survived by her husband of 43 years, Toby Dye (Raymond Howard Dye), and her adoring daughters Amanda Knecht Dye (Rodolfo Sanchez Sarracino) and Caitlyn Knecht Dye (James Murphy). Proud Lita to her grandson Nico.

She is also survived by her younger siblings Joe (Anne Chipman) and Carrie Knecht, stepmother Sherrin Ashcraft, brother-in-law David Dye, and cousins Stuart and Farrell Grannen.

Celebration of life Sunday, May 17, 11am -2:30pm. Service begins promptly at

11:30. Botanic Gardens McKinley Pavilion, 1000 Lake Cook Road, Glencoe, IL. Free parking available.

Livestream the service here: <https://www.asimplestreaming.com/mkknecht/>

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made in her name to Indivisible Evanston, the Go Red for Women Research Initiative of the American Heart Association, Paws and Claws Cat Rescue, and Tree House Humane Society.

Arrangements by Inclusive Funeral Care, 773-318-1305 or www.InclusiveFuneralCare.com.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

MAY 17. 11:00 AM - 2:30 PM (CT)

Chicago Botanic Gardens
1000 Lake Cook Road
Glencoe, IL 60022
<https://www.chicagobotanic.org/>

11am guest arrival, 11:30am service begins. Reception to follow.

Tribute Wall



“ *Inclusive Funeral Care created a Webcast in memory of Kitty Knecht*



Team Inclusive Funeral Care - April 14 at 01:55 PM



“ *Fairest of All was purchased for the family of Kitty Knecht.*



April 24 at 10:00 AM



“ *1 file added to the tribute wall*



Toby - April 23 at 10:56 AM



I know this look well... and I really miss it.

Toby - April 23 at 10:56 AM

TD

“ 1 file added to the album *Kitty and Her Family*



Toby Dye - April 14 at 04:40 PM

IW

“ *Ian and Whitney purchased the Country Basket B looms for the family of Kitty Knecht.*



Ian and Whitney - April 11 at 04:52 PM

TF

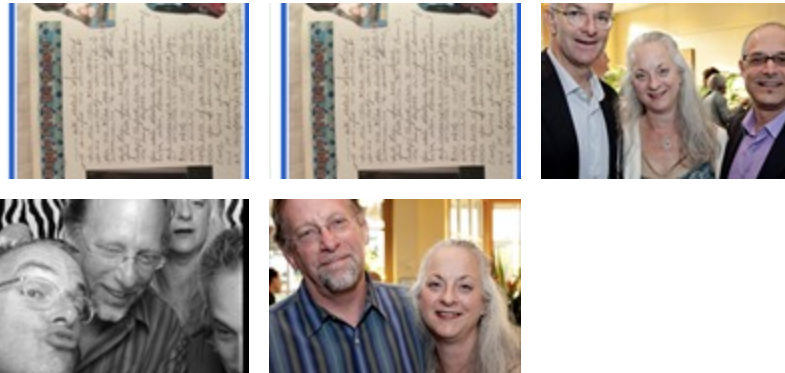
“ *The Sayen Hammerschlag Family purchased the Small Garden Dish for the family of Kitty Knecht.*



The Sayen Hammerschlag Family - April 11 at 04:06 PM

TR

“ 29 files added to the tribute wall



Tracy - March 22 at 03:54 PM

TF

Kitty -- for 38 years you were a compassionate ,fun, brilliant, devoted, kind, mama bear and very loving friend and 'sister'. I will miss you beyond words.

tracy c ferm - March 22 at 04:02 PM

TO

Wonderful photos and an appropriation description of Kitty...

Toby - March 23 at 06:05 PM

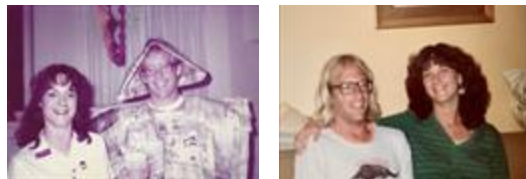
TO

... sorry... I can't see with tears in my eyes.... "an appropriate description of Kitty.

Toby - March 23 at 06:12 PM

TO

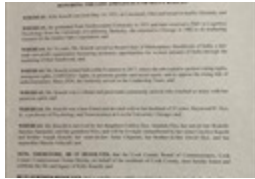
“ 2 files added to the album Kitty and Her Family



Toby - March 22 at 10:12 AM

TO

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Toby - March 18 at 10:52 AM

TO

Cook County Resolution Honoring and Celebrating the Life of Kitty.

Toby - March 18 at 10:53 AM

TO

“ 2 files added to the tribute wall



Toby - March 17 at 02:41 PM

KK

“ *Kitty, I don't know not knowing you. It's been a long and good ride. I will never forget your smile, laugh and occasional head shake. Heaven has never seen beats like yours. Rest well and continue your great work from above.*



Kathy Keating - March 16 at 09:54 PM

TO

“ 7 files added to the album *Kitty and Her Family*



Toby - March 16 at 08:03 PM