



## Kim McDowell

October 1, 2010

Kim Kurka McDowell, 58, of Cape Girardeau, passed Oct. 1, 2010. She was a woman of beautiful spiritual belief who loved her husband, her family, her pets, friends and everyone she worked with. Battling cancer for nearly two years primarily through faith, she was private about her health as she didn't want others to worry about her. On more than one occasion she said: "I have no fear about the future. God is love - all encompassing and all good. Nothing is by accident." Born Sept. 9, 1952, in Cape Girardeau, she was the daughter of Jere - Jerry - Emil Kurka and Virginia Jane Smith Kurka Frenzel. She and Terry William McDowell were married July 6, 1984. She was a member of First Church of Christ, Scientist in Cape Girardeau and its Mother Church, The First Church of Christ, Scientist in Boston, Mass. She studied for a master's degree in divinity at Andover Newton School of Theology, and attained the status of Christian Science practitioner. She was a long-time Reader, leading worship services at the church in Cape Girardeau, which she and her husband also helped maintain, often serving as organ player and music leaders as well. She devoted considerable time to helping others through life challenges. She was a 1970 graduate of Central High School, and a 1974 graduate of Southeast Missouri State University with a degree in marketing management. After graduating from college, backpacking across Europe, and teaching high school for a year in the Parkway school system in St. Louis County, she worked in marketing at Colonial Federal Savings and Loan in Cape Girardeau before moving to San Jose, California, where she worked as

an administrator and instructor at Twelve Acres, a boarding school for the developmentally disabled. She developed a network of friends along each step of the journey who oftentimes found themselves remembered over the years through the names of her many pets. Returning to Cape Girardeau, she helped found Tipoff magazine, the long-time tourist publication distributed throughout Southeast Missouri, and began working for Concord Publishing House and the Southeast Missourian, eventually rising to the position of assistant to the publisher and then director of human resources for Rust Communications, a family-owned media company encompassing more than 50 newspapers in eight states. Besides managing HR, she led health and property insurance negotiations for the company. She was proud of her certification as a Senior Professional in Human Resources by the Society of Human Resource Management. She was also head of the Southeast Missourian's social committee, and along with committee members and her husband helped turn every company gathering into a sparkling and inclusive affair. She was the newspaper contact for many local charitable organizations and not-for-profits, and over the years she served on numerous community boards of directors, including the Arts Council of Southeast Missouri, United Way, Cape Girardeau Area Chamber of Commerce, Old Town Cape, the Community Concert Association, Business and Professional Women's Club and others. She was a past chairwoman of Art in Bloom with her garden club, and was a founding member of the City of Roses music festival and helped found and lead the Youth Education Learning and Literacy (YELL) Foundation. She served on the board of directors of the Village Retirement Community in Springdale, Ark. Among her favorite responsibilities was liaison with the newspaper's various adopt-a-schools and the annual Southeast Missouri Science Fair, which she helped coordinate for more than 25 years, a love of science perhaps sparked by her own award-winning "Tornado" science project as a high school student. She also coordinated Christmas for the Elderly and Toybox for more than two decades, working with the Jaycees and others in providing Christmas cheer for those in need. Although she never had

children of her own, from a young age she helped take care of children. When her father and sister died before she was a teenager, she and her mother moved in with her sister's family and became like a big sister to all the kids in the house. Later, she was a favorite aunt to her more than 30 nieces and nephews (and great-nieces and nephews). Among her activities with children were trips for corn dogs, ice cream, feeding the ducks, walking the dogs, live music and theatrical performances at the Fox in St. Louis and the River Campus in Cape Girardeau, and shopping. She always fulfilled a child's fantasy about magical aunts: complete with her own secret garden just for the kids, and boxes full of toys. She instilled daring, creativity, independence and kindness within her broad family. In the last year, she became a financial contributor with her husband to the Discovery Playhouse Children's Museum in Cape Girardeau. She was not always, however, much of a cook, and at one point she was proud not to have made a home-cooked meal outside of a microwave for several years. This changed later, and her tea parties and dinners became renowned for delicious and creative cuisine. Courageous, spirited and always upbeat, she was quick to join in the singing of patriotic songs or childhood ditties, lead hymns on the piano or otherwise get a group engaged in having a good time. She also never failed to make a statement with her clothing, which was always classy and usually brightly colored. In the office, she was known for often wearing an ID badge with photos of her taken in costumes during Halloween. Her favorite: Cleopatra. She loved her mother, who preceded her in death, dearly and rarely missed spending time with her each day. And she adored her husband, who was her true love and life partner. She is survived by her husband, mother-in-law Ina JoAnn Hanners McDowell, sisters Wendy Kurka Rust and Wendy's husband Gary Wayne and Joy Kurka Gilbert and her husband Gary Kenneth "Sonny", all of Cape Girardeau. Nieces and nephews on Wendy's side are Penny Rochelle Rust Terry and her husband Alan of Pinehurst, N.C.; Gary Wayne Rust II and his wife Suzuyo of Chesterfield, Mo.; Holly Rust Payne and her husband

Richmond of Hoffman Estates, Ill.; Wynn Bradford Rust and his wife Kimberly of Chapel Hill, N.C.; Jon Kurka Rust and his wife Victoria of Cape Girardeau; and Rex Dearmont Rust and his wife Sherry of Cape Girardeau. Great-nieces and nephews are Alex Benjamin and Katherine Marie Terry; Julia Misaki and Sho Thomas Rust; Reagan Jane, Robyn and Morgan Payne; Erik Rockford, Rachel Ann, Rebekah Kristina and Sarah Elizabeth Rust; and Yuliana Kurka and Ekaterina Ava Rust. Nieces and nephews on Joy's side are Kenneth Dean Gilbert and his wife Margaret of Ellisville, Mo.; Gay Gilbert Pilsner and her husband Robert of Cape Girardeau; and Julie Gilbert Becker and her husband Ken of Poplar Bluff, Mo. Great-nieces and nephews are Sunny Deshay and Katie Michelle Gilbert; Arthur Blake, Heidi, Alex Wayne, Haley and Hannah Pilsner; and Erika, Alison, Luke Spencer and Connor Reece Becker. Kim was preceded in death by her parents, sister Sally and niece Robin. She will be missed by many, but her family knows her spirit soars in a beautiful place, whole and perfect with God. A visitation will be Monday, 4-7 PM at Ford & Sons Mt. Auburn Chapel. A private memorial service will be held at a later date. Memorials may be sent to First Church of Christ, Scientist, 215 N. West End Blvd., Cape Girardeau, MO., 63701 or to the Discovery Playhouse Children's Museum, 502 Broadway, Cape Girardeau, MO., 63701.

# Tribute Wall

RW

“ To Kim's Family, My thoughts and prayers have been with you. Kim and I rode the same school bus. I will always remember her smiling face. Our paths crossed later at an enrichment summer school tour of the Southeast Missourian newspaper. Kim's smile was again on her face as she lead the students on the tour. May God comfort you.

Rita Heimbaugh Weber - July 10, 2010 at 12:00 AM

RB

“ After more than 20 years of working closely with Kim, our prayers go out to her entire family. She was always a positive and caring person and especially about all the employees at Southeast Missouriian. She will be greatly missed by Kim Dang in our office and by me. What a wonderful person! Bob

Robert Burleigh - July 10, 2010 at 12:00 AM

CW

“ Kim, I still have a Grace Cafe card that you used to write your numbers on, in case you needed me to pet-sit for you. You were quite a staple in the Cape community, and we're at a loss without you.

Carrie Woelk - July 10, 2010 at 12:00 AM

PM

“ This was truly shocking news. I always looked forward to getting to know Kim better. She was so encouraging and spirited when I opened my gallery and showed her support. I am so sorry for Terry and the family's loss.

Peg MacDougall - May 10, 2010 at 12:00 AM

CR

“ Working with Kim at the Missourian was always a pleasure. Never have I met someone with such enthusiasm and kindness as Kim. She will truly be missed.

Christal Scheper Ritchey - May 10, 2010 at 12:00 AM

ME

“ We are deeply sorry about Kim's passing. We are thinking of your family at this difficult time. Bless you all, Jayne and Loyd

Mr. and Ms. Loyd Ervin - May 10, 2010 at 12:00 AM

TP

“ The world's light is now dimmer because Kim is gone. She was a lovely lady, and we will miss her. Our condolences to her family. The staff of the Banner Press Linda Redeffer Paula Seabaugh Cynthia Haas

The Banner Press - May 10, 2010 at 12:00 AM

JG

“ I am very sorry to hear of Kim's death. Terry, you are in my thoughts and prayers.

Jane Gockel - April 10, 2010 at 12:00 AM

EF

“ You will be missed greatly. God Bless! The Staff at the River Campus Box Office

Ellen Farrow - April 10, 2010 at 12:00 AM

RM

“ Terry, you have my deepest sympathy for the loss of your wife. I always enjoyed working with her and I will miss her terribly! You and the rest of her family are in my prayers.

---

**Robin Meier-McQuay** - April 10, 2010 at 12:00 AM

RM

“ So very sorry to learn of your loss...My prayers are with all of you.

---

**ROSE MOYERS** - April 10, 2010 at 12:00 AM

JM

“ Kim... What beautiful and amazing accomplishments. You are truly a star. Even though our paths haven't crossed in many years I will always remember my cousin as a caring and fun-loving human being. Thanks for being there for my family when we needed you. God bless.

---

**Jeffrey Lee Martin** - April 10, 2010 at 12:00 AM

DR

“ Please accept our prayers and deepest sympathy in the loss of your precious Aunt Kim, sister, and wife and all. Ever since I have known your family, It has been very obvious the impact she has had on your lives, and literally all of our lives. We will always remember your Aunt Kim. Love and prayers, Dianne and family

---

**Dianne Kogge Roth** - March 10, 2010 at 12:00 AM

TW

“ We are grateful and honored to have known Kim during our seven year stay in Missouri. I remember the happiest times ... dinner parties and Kim's flowing blouses, how she lovingly talked about her family and pet menagerie, showing us the the new house (also known as the first Florida house in Cape). I remember very clearly a time when we stopped by the big old house - it was the first time I ever saw Kim in casual attire - she was gardening and was very excited about showing Emma a turtle she had found. Terry, please know, although the miles and years have intervened, our hearts and prayers are with you. God Bless, Dawn, Jerry, Emma, and Romey

---

**The Washo's** - March 10, 2010 at 12:00 AM

CR

“ WITH DEEPEST SYMPATHY FOR YOUR LOSS ... CAROLYN KINDER RN

---

**CAROLYN KINDER RN** - March 10, 2010 at 12:00 AM

NH

“ So sorry to read about Kim. My condolences to Terry, Wendy, the rest of the family. While I was still living in Cape, I was aware of how community-oriented, and other-person-oriented she was. My sympathies to the family.

---

**Nancy Hilty** - March 10, 2010 at 12:00 AM

LN

“ Terry-I will always remember Kim graciously welcoming me to your home and McDowell family gatherings. Our thoughts and prayers are with you now.

---

**Loel and Mary Ann Nance** - February 10, 2010 at 12:00 AM

SS

“ I first met Kim and Terry when I joined Cape Road Runners. Kim was a very sweet and helpful person. Her kindness will be missed. Our prayers are with the family.

Steve Seyller - February 10, 2010 at 12:00 AM

MH

“ We worked with Kim for so many years with Toybox. On behalf of the Cape Jaycees, God Bless Kim McDowell

Matt Hopkins - February 10, 2010 at 12:00 AM

KN

“ I had of pleasure of meeting Kim many years ago when I first started working at Concord Printing. She was always willing to lend a hand to those in need. Also, she always seemed to show up in the office when things may have not been going well to add a bright spot to the day. The thing I remember most about Kim is she always ask about my son even the last time I saw her which was not but a short time ago. My sympathy goes out to her husband, Terry, and the rest of her family. I know that she will be missed dearly. Always remember there are angels among us and Kim truly was one of the angels that was among us here on earth. God Bless all of the family

Kristi Nitsch - February 10, 2010 at 12:00 AM

TB

“ I am so sorry to hear of this great loss. Kim was a very sweet lady and will be missed by many.

Terri Baker - February 10, 2010 at 12:00 AM

SW

“ I worked with Kim for several years at the Southeast Missourian. I happened to see her about a year or so ago at Shivelbine's while we were on a visit home. We only said hello to one another but it was that typical bubbly HELLO! you normally got from her. Condolences to Terry, Gary and Wendy and the rest of her family. She will be sorely missed I'm sure.

---

**Sheila Watson** - February 10, 2010 at 12:00 AM

HO

“ Kim was truly an elegant woman and one of the nicest people anyone could hope to meet. She made everyone feel like she had known them for years. She will be missed.

---

**Hollie** - February 10, 2010 at 12:00 AM

LM

“ Terry- I was so shocked and saddened to hear of Kim's death. My heart goes out to you, as I know the great love the two of you shared. Please know you will be in my prayers, and in my thoughts. With love- Lynn

---

**Lynn Moll** - February 10, 2010 at 12:00 AM

LK

“ Having met Kim for the first time twenty one years ago, her aura never really changed. I remember entering the offices at the Southeast Missourian, where my brother-in-law Peter, held an office . It was Christmas time. Kim was dressed in a wonderful Christmas sweater, with a silly little hat perched on top of her dark mane of curls, and she was playing "Santa's Helper" on that Friday afternoon, and she welcomed all of us, especially our young children, in. Later, having relocated to Cape in 2002, our paths crossed again as we worked together, serving on the board for the Arts Council. Kim was always quick to smile and say hello, and ALWAYS willing to help with her wisdom in matters of finance, and human resources. I held great respect for her strong, yet quiet reserve, and her love for her husband and family was clearly a huge source of happiness and pride. I will miss seeing Kim "around town", but am confident that she is with our Lord, and I hope that her life will be remembered as a celebration of life affirming acts, as she was a loyal and dedicated servant. My husband Frank, and I, offer our deepest sympathy to Terry and to her family, as we know that she will be sorely missed in this life, as we know it. But surely, comfort will be found as we turn to our faith. I am certain that that is how she would want it. Fondly, Lori Ann

---

**Lori Ann Kinder** - February 10, 2010 at 12:00 AM

PH

“ As Adopt-a-School coordinator for the Missourian, Kim made sure to take care of us at Schultz Middle School for many years--taking great pride in the publication of our newspaper, "The Paw." Fortunate were all of us who got to know and call this special person our friend. Terry and family, you are in my prayers.

---

**Pat Heckert** - February 10, 2010 at 12:00 AM

JD

“ *Kim was truly kind. She had a love of others and always treated peopler with respect. Heaven is fortunate to have received her there!*

---

**Jane Rader DeBoe** - January 10, 2010 at 12:00 AM