



Valerie Stein Mendizabal

November 28, 1966 - April 10, 2018

Valerie Stein Mendizabal, 51, of Webster Groves, Missouri died of liver failure and related complications early in the morning of Tuesday, April 10, 2018, under hospice care in St. Louis. She was born November 28, 1966 in Saint Louis, Missouri. Moving with her family to North Oaks, Minnesota and then later to Summit, New Jersey, Val brimmed with energy and an independent spirit and loved to have fun, whether it was with her beloved cousins or her numerous friends. She developed an early passion for the outdoors, winning ribbons for her horseback riding at the stables behind her home in New Jersey, and filling her stringers with trout during family fishing trips to Rockbridge, in the Ozarks. At summer camp at Kehonka on Lake Winnepesaukee in New Hampshire, Val took to sailing as she developed friendships that she joyfully renewed as an adult. Likewise, Val kept up with her many friends from Summit High School through class reunions and social networking, and this was a pattern in her life: she loved to reconnect with old friends and make new ones, many of whom will remember her bright smile and laughter. Val attended the University of Arizona in Tucson and graduated in 1989 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Fashion Merchandising and Marketing. While at U of A, Val joined the Pi Phi sorority and became a lifelong fan of the University of Arizona Wildcats basketball and football teams. As a young adult Val had a successful career in the fashion industry, starting in New York City at Saks Fifth Avenue then moving to San Francisco working for Gap and Old Navy as merchandise planner and buyer. In 2001 she relocated

back to the East Coast to work for Coach in New York City and Retail Brand Alliance in Enfield, Connecticut. Following marriage in 2004, Valerie pursued her passion for fitness by becoming a group spinning instructor, inspiring and motivating her students with enthusiasm, creativity and flair. She was also an active volunteer with the Junior League, chairing several committees. Starting in the early 2000s she combined her energy and organizational skills to run her family's annual Fourth of July reunions in Cape Girardeau, Missouri. Many dozens of family members of different generations from around the country have Val to thank for the laughter, fun, and close family relationships that she nurtured through these events. Finally, Val cherished her dogs. From her childhood West Highland White Terrier, Bonnie, to her Vizslas, Maxi, Titus and Bruschi, to her little adopted Puggle, Mitzi, Val always had a special bond with her canine companions.

Val is survived by her father, Paul Arthur Stein of New Canaan, Connecticut; her stepmother Marjorie Stein, also of New Canaan; her brother, Paul Garwood Stein of Smyrna, Georgia; two stepsisters, Carolyn Millstein of Washington D.C. and Elizabeth Neiva de Figuerado of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and her former husband, Lorenzo Mendizabal, of Connecticut. She was predeceased by her mother, Ann Garwood Stein, of Summit, New Jersey.

A private graveside ceremony will be held in Cape Girardeau at a later date.

Family and friends who wish to remember Val may do so by donating to their local animal rescue organization or by adopting their next pet.

Tribute Wall

CS

“ I just learned of Valerie's passing. I am so happy that we were able to see her and spend time with her when she was in Tucson last fall. We were friends from Bloomfield, CT - cyclists and dog lovers together. You are missed.

Caryn Stedman - May 09, 2018 at 02:03 PM

DM

“ To Val's family.....

So very sorry to have learned of Val's passing .

A very special person is gone way before her time.

RIP Val and deepest sympathy to the family and friends of Val.

Dave Margolin

David Margolin - April 21, 2018 at 04:19 PM

JO

“ I will always have fond memories of Val and her dogs. She was one of the sweetest women I have ever had the pleasure of knowing. It was really sad when we found out she was moving back to St. Louis, truly our loss as she was such an active member of the CVVC. Her vibrant personality will now be missed by all. Be at peace sweet Val for one day we will meet again.
Joan Toepke

Joan - April 16, 2018 at 07:27 AM

SN

“ I remember happy times with Val and was so disappointed when she left to re-join her family in Missouri. We have missed her greatly and now mourn her passing. RIP Val may your family know that she will always be greatly missed.

Susan Nakamura - April 15, 2018 at 07:34 PM

LM

“ We in the CT Valley Vizsla Club were glad to have a chance to know Val and her Vizslas. Val was an active member of CVVC, doing everything from committee work to being on the executive board. We were sorry to lose her as a member when she moved back to be with family, and very sad to hear this latest news. Rest in Peace, Val.

Linda Morris - April 15, 2018 at 02:21 PM

HZ

“ This obituary is a beautiful tribute to our sweet friend Val. As I've thought about her this week, I keep coming back to her smile, which she had ready for everyone, her enthusiasm and spirit, and her generosity. I am so sorry she struggled with illness at the end and she went through it all with grace, strength and so much courage. Rest In Peace, sweet Val. Your heart and smile will be missed.

Heather Zoeller - April 15, 2018 at 12:16 PM

 David
Aitken

“ Val was a very special girl. I will always remember and cherish her.

David Aitken - April 15, 2018 at 08:45 AM

HS

“ Valerie was a woman of energy, enthusiasm, and love. She bestowed the gift of light be on her family and will be cherished forever by all of us. Rest In Peace my precious niece. Love, Aunt Harriett

harriett Smith - April 13, 2018 at 06:48 PM