



Patricia "Pat" Kautter

August 20, 2018

Patricia "Pat" (Bernas) Kautter, of Lancaster, revered teacher, stage director, choreographer and visionary, passed away on Monday, August 20, 2018, after a year-long battle with cancer. She was one of Lancaster County's artistic luminaries.

Born March 5, 1949, in Mt. Carmel, Pa., she began her childhood education at St. Joseph's Polish Parochial School, then went on to receive a B.S. in Secondary Education English from Millersville University, followed by graduate work at Millersville, Duke University, and The University of the Arts. She earned an M.A. in Dance Education from Temple University, where she received Temple's Professional Dance Educator Award.

She began teaching English at Hempfield High School in 1975 and for 32 years worked passionately advocating for the arts and creating theater and dance curricula. She founded Hempfield's renowned Dance Theater Program, directing and choreographing it for 25 years along with the school's fall productions and spring musicals. In addition, she served as Hempfield Education Association's President, Vice-President, Representative, and Chief Negotiator, and Pennsylvania's Dance Representative, writing national educational standards.

She enjoyed the wit and professionalism of her fellow teachers. She was

proud of the students she guided throughout her career, from students who had never been on stage before, to many who pursued professions in the arts, becoming dance educators, actors, dancers, directors and choreographers. She loved watching and hearing about their careers and successes.

Pat directed and choreographed for many local theaters, including Ephrata Performing Arts Center, the Actors' Company of Pennsylvania, PRiMA Theatre, Theater of the Seventh Sister, Elizabethtown College, and American Music Theater. She loved working with community theater, where talented people working in other fields came together to perform.

She received numerous awards, including Lancaster County's Art Educator of the Year, Pennsylvania's Dance Educator of the Year, Northeast Dance Educator of the Year, Dance Theater Nominee for Pennsylvania's Best Practices in the Arts, and was the recipient of Lancaster's Red Rose Award.

Pat also volunteered as an English instructor for the American Red Cross at Fort Indiantown Gap's Vietnamese Relocation Center, and taught classes at Lancaster's Adult Enrichment Center and through the Spanish American Civic Association.

Despite her deep investment in the community, Pat's family remained her greatest commitment, and she wanted her obituary to include her own words:

My life can't be reduced to a mere list of schools attended and jobs held. My life was the people I met along the way in a world and a universe that fascinated me. I loved life.

My greatest loves are my sons, Rich and Doug, and grandsons Zach and Rowen. From grade school into high school and college, you could find me on the sidelines of my sons' sporting events, cheering, occasionally running up

and down the sidelines, and using my two-fingered whistle to let them know I was there. I'm proud of all their achievements, but mostly I'm proud of the kind of men they are: kind, witty, loyal and sensitive. Their care and support of me made me realize the depth of their compassion.

My grandsons, Zach and Rowen, lovingly parented by Rich and his wife Maria, are smart, talented and handsome, two young men who love sports and the theater. They make me proud, make me laugh, and make me feel loved. I'll always be watching over them wherever they are. And they can bet I'll be on the sidelines or in the audience, clapping, yelling, and two-finger whistling!

I love my family, my mother Irene, brothers Len and Phil, their wives Barbara and Peggy, my nieces and nephews, Melissa, David, Brian and Brad, and their children. I love Doug's partner, Annie, Nels Martin, my friend and support during many months of my cancer journey, and Rich Kautter Sr., Rich and Doug's father, who cared for me throughout my illness and shared in so much of my life. I loved family holiday gatherings where stories of Mt. Carmel, Pa., my dad, our large extended family, and childhood antics became the source of laughter and teasing. Although I found myself on opposite ends of the political spectrum from most of my family, we rose above dissension to support and love each other throughout our lives and in times of greatest need.

My friends are the best. Strangely, my illness taught me to embrace friendship, to partake in its benefits daily, like nourishment for my mind and soul. In my struggle to beat cancer, my friends became my "Arms Up!" army. "Arms Up!" was my call for prayer, hope, and acceptance. Through visits, texts, cards, letters, flowers, soup, Facebook messages, research, and videos, they surrounded me with love, and buoyed my spirit with encouragement, laughter, prayers and care. From the youngest to the oldest, I

celebrated their ages and stages of life, their wisdom, wit, and talents.

I loved music, art, literature, theater, and dance, and was passionate about the transformative effect art had on young and old alike. Dance, music and theater were second languages to me and universal languages that crossed any divide. Creativity, with a capital or small “c,” my own or a friend’s or a student’s made me giddy.

I loved Christmas, its energy, warmth, and decorations. The smell of a live tree and garland, wrapped presents, the glow of lights, the blanket of kindness that envelops people at that time of year, and the solemnity of the day’s meaning never got old . . .

Pat will be remembered and loved for her sharp wit and sense of humor, her intellectual curiosity and love of play, her verbal dexterity, and her ability to distill complex problems into meaningful, teachable parts. She was an artists’ prophet, with a love for and keen understanding of the potential in every person. She unleashed her students’ passions and raised the bar high to summon their finest performances.

A private mass will be held at the family’s discretion. The public is invited to her Celebration of Life, to be held at the Hempfield High School Performing Arts Center, 1555 Kauffman Road, Landisville, Pa. on Saturday, September 29, 2018, at 7:00 PM.

Since Pat loved to wear and decorate in white, there will be a “Pique-Nique en Blanc” in her honor on Sunday, September 30, 2018, at 2:00 PM in Buchanan Park, Lancaster, near the “Live Your Dream Tree” planted this summer in gratitude to her (located behind the flag pole off Buchanan Ave., near the rose garden). Attendees are asked to RSVP on Facebook (search “Pat Kautter Pique-Nique en Blanc”), wear white and bring their own picnic and beverages.

Her sons give a heartfelt thanks to the many friends who extended kindness and care. In lieu of flowers, they invite you to contribute to their mother's oncologist's research lab at Johns Hopkins. (Please go to <https://secure.jhu.edu/form/fjhm>, then designate your gift to go to "The Work of Doctor," and then type below it, "Dr. Noah Hahn.")

Previous Events

Memorial Service

SEP **29**. 7:00 PM (ET)

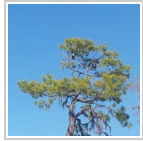
Performing Arts Center at Hempfield High School
1555 Kauffman Road
Landisville, PA 17538

Tribute Wall



“ *Patricia "Pat" Kautter*

October 22, 2023 at 11:34 PM



“ *I am so sorry to hear. I will hold Mrs. Kautter in my heart forever. She was by far the most influential teacher I had the pleasure of knowing at Hempfield. She taught me Theater, Dance Theater and English. One of my fondest memories is when we started the "Malaprop players" club. We went to Fulton Opera house for competition. Great memories. You are in my thoughts and prayers.*

Kathleen Favorite - December 29, 2018 at 07:33 PM



Class of 92

Kathleen Favorite - December 29, 2018 at 07:33 PM



“ *Mrs. Kautter was my 12 grade English teacher. She was a great instructor who helped with grammer and writing- skills that I used throughout college and life. Most of all she was a nice person and a great asset to the Hempfield School District. My thoughts and prayers are with her family and friends. Wendy Weitzel, HHS Class of 1980*

Wendy Weitzel - August 27, 2018 at 10:46 PM



“ *Doug,rich and family so sorry to the passing of your mom,I have you and her in my thoughts*

pat kilgour - August 27, 2018 at 03:24 PM



Im so sorry for your loss she was a great person all around...im hoping to make it on Saturday. My prayers are with Rich, Doug and family at this time

Teri Frey - August 27, 2018 at 06:56 PM

KR

“ A hero angel. PK inspires my daily dance. Thousands carry the song of her heart as she impressed her unique vision and molded dreams. Shine on, sweet soulful whirlwind.



krystal - August 26, 2018 at 10:57 AM