



Christine Augustyniak

April 4, 1953 - November 2, 2022

Christine was a fiercely loyal sister and friend. She had an easy habit of making friends and loved nothing better than bringing people together. She loved to cook and entertain, to travel, and to introduce others to new experiences.

Christine grew up in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan at a time when there were lots of trees, dirt roads and fields for building forts and riding bikes. Our parents nurtured her strength and independence. Still in her young teens, she often organized groups of neighborhood friends to take the bus or train into Detroit to visit the museums, library and stores. She discovered politics in her teens and helped to organize the McGovern campaign in Oakland County, which was then a Republican stronghold.

Christine left Michigan to attend Harvard in Cambridge, MA. She fell in love with the east coast and instantly became a 'big city' girl, loving the history, culture, and excitement of the city. She developed a love of theater and show tunes from working on high school and college productions. She didn't entirely forget her Midwest roots, she returned to the University of Michigan to get her PhD. in Economics and she never stopped trying to introduce her east coast friends to the Detroit specialty of Vernors Ginger Ale.

She taught briefly at Holy Cross in Worcester, MA before starting her career at the Environmental Protection Agency in Washington, DC where she

remained for 30 years. She was very proud of the work that she did at EPA helping to regulate pesticides and toxic substances. Her work was recognized with an EPA Honor Award and by then President Bill Clinton.

She was an intrepid and enthusiastic traveler. As part of her work at EPA, she traveled to Eastern Europe several times to teach economics and she supported the US delegation negotiating international environmental treaties in Paris and Senegal. For pleasure, she traveled extensively in Europe, Asia, Northern Africa, South America, and the US. As a teen she traveled across Europe and North Africa for two months with her sister on a Eurail Pass, falling into easy conversations with fellow travelers on the trains and in the youth hostels. Her laughter and love of life attracted other travelers to their train car, so their car was always full even when the train was not.

She inherited an enthusiasm for driving from Dad and got her license as soon as she turned 16. On one family vacation shortly after getting her license, she took the wheel and drove from Florida to Detroit in just one day. While in college she routinely made the 720-mile trip from Cambridge to Detroit several times a year.

She read voraciously and filled her home with books, converting walls to bookcases wherever she could until she ran out of walls. She loved mysteries but also read extensively about science, history, and politics. She loved wordplay and puns and was happy to make family and friends groan with laughter.

She loved to entertain and cook for family and friends and was very creative. When living in the dorm without access to an oven she managed to “bake” a birthday cake in an electric frying pan. She also managed to make pasta verdi without any counters to lay out the sheets of pasta. She introduced her family to sushi in the 70s, at a time when there were few (if any) Japanese restaurants in suburban Detroit. She loved to try new recipes although she

tended to favor labor intensive recipes that, in her own words, worked best if you had galley slaves or were on house arrest. That is, recipes with lots of fresh herbs and vegetables, often chopped in match stick size pieces. For her it was not only about nurturing, celebrating and keeping in touch with good friends, but also about bringing interesting people together.

Another of her passions was picking out clothes. She was in her element when someone was starting a new job and wanted to upgrade their wardrobe. And she never stopped trying to get her sisters to dress and accessorize more fashionably.

We will miss Christine's love, strength, caring, and support. Most of all we will miss her intelligence, wit and the way that she pushed us to be better, stronger and more adventurous. She was a force of nature and our world is a bit emptier because of her passing. Godspeed.

Tribute Wall

GD

“Christine was a close friend when we were in the economics PhD program together at U of Michigan. One semester we and a couple of other friends took a course in public finance. This course met at 1:00 PM and we usually went for burgers around 11:00 AM. After that, we wandered over to our favorite pinball arcade, the Cross-Eyed Moose. We were quite proficient pinball players (Christine not least), and typically won a lot of free games. A dilemma often arose around 12:50 about whether we should abandon our free games and go to class on time, or continue playing until we ran out of games. The standard result was that three or four of us trooped sheepishly into class around 1:25 PM and occupied the only remaining seats, which were generally on the far side of the room so we had to walk directly in front of the professor as he lectured. Remarkably, we were never chastised for this behavior, and we did learn a few things about public finance. Greg Dow

Greg Dow - April 15, 2025 at 06:10 PM

MS

“I worked with Christine in EPA's Office of Toxic Substances. As our senior economist she worked on some of the toughest issues our office dealt with, and did so with relentless intensity and exceptional skill. She was one of the smartest people I have worked with, and she combined this with a great sense of humor and wit. Altogether she was a wonderful colleague.

Michael Shapiro - January 13, 2023 at 03:40 PM

BC

“Christine had a great big personality and was fun to be around. Aside from the economic advice I got from her over the years, I will remember her delicious homemade biscotti! RIP Christine.

Brion Cook - January 08, 2023 at 10:51 PM

AL

“ I will miss you Christine! I will remember the wonderful memories of sharing an office suite when you were the EPA Toxics Senior Advisor to the OPPTS Assistant Administrator and I was the Pesticides Senior Advisor. I will always treasure the memories, conversations and the wonderful stories about your travels. Rest in peace my dear colleague and friend. Arnold Layne

Arnold E. Layne - January 08, 2023 at 07:24 PM

TK

“ Christine set the standard for independence and living life by one’s own definition. She was unmatched for her loyalty, generosity, and friendship. Life without her will surely have less joy and laughter and far less food. She taught us by example a lot about being a real adult--that you could be remarkably smart and sharp-witted without being at all overbearing, and mature without being boring in any way. More than thirty years ago Christine (and her henchwomen) made the item in the picture for me when we were moving away from DC—in its own unique way (much like Christine herself) it has helped to guide me ever since.



Tim Knutson - December 16, 2022 at 04:51 PM

PB

“Christine was a wonderful friend and political mentor. We will miss her insightful and knowledgeable information on the current political climate. We are saddened that she left us before seeing the results of the last midterm election because I think she would’ve been pleased. It left a big void not to be able to call her to discuss the outcome and its meaning. I can only imagine her commentary on Trump’s NFTs.

We have discussed politics with her while waiting in airports for delayed flights and on ski lifts that have been stuck, as well as from the comfort of both her home and ours. Our favorite quote from her is a distortion of the script of the movie *The Sixth Sense*: “They are all around us; they’re stupid, and they don’t know that they are stupid.”

Pam Bridgen and Val Lee

Pamela Bridgen - December 15, 2022 at 10:49 PM

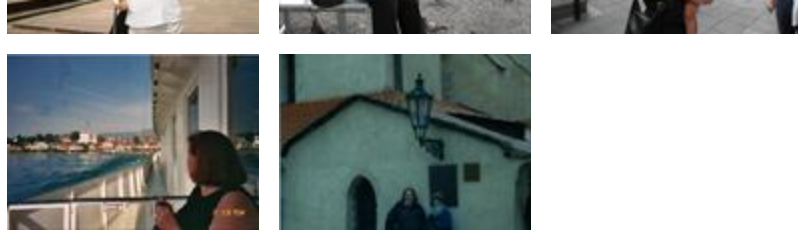
“ I first met Christine at EPA back near the turn of the century. She was a great friend, mentor, source of information and inspiration. If you didn't know where she stood on an issue you really were not paying attention. We worked together on the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer. She was a great tour guide for our Montreal Protocol meetings and made meetings in foreign countries much more entertaining. Other people thought they were junkets but she always said “international meetings are a much less convenient way to conduct business”. Talk about resourceful who knew she could find a Kinko's in Nagasaki Japan? She loved to bake, entertain, knit, and seemed to have a rather strong affinity for coffee.

Allow me to share a couple of anecdotes. During a visit to Montreal, Canada I was diligently getting Christine a cup of coffee, because until she was caffeinated, she really wasn't functioning, based on her specification that it should have enough milk so it was the color of her skin. When I came back with the coffee and held it up to her arm, to verify that the amount of milk was correct, she asked me in short declarative statements what exactly was I doing? During Montreal Protocol meetings we were considered interchangeable in supporting the U.S. position and were soon designated as “twins” as in “send one of the twins to that meeting”. Being designated as her brother was an honor I have always cherish. With her passing I think the world has become a quieter place.

She loved to travel as seen here in a picture in Prague Czech Republic with Amy Nostrandt and herself, she enjoyed knitting as in the picture on Lake Genève Switzerland, she made friends all over as seen in Tokyo Japan, she enjoyed feeding and playing with the local animals as here in Kyoto feeding the birds, or the monkeys at the Taj Mahal in India.

Bill Chism





Bill Chism - December 11, 2022 at 05:51 PM

AN

“ I met Christine at EPA in 1985 and it was friendship at first sight. Whether it was working together at the Agency; trading stories about people, policies, and inanities; cooking and partying together; traveling together; sharing stories and struggles about family; talking about books, the news, and singer/songwriters; commiserating or celebrating - she was there, a vibrant personality, full of wit, intelligence, and compassion. Here are two pictures. One picture is from 1994, when she was one of the eleven people total to witness Bruce and me get married. The other picture is from 2020, taken on her front steps. The envelope Christine holds is full of get-out-the-vote letters Christine wrote to turn out voters in Maine in 2020.



Angela Nugent - December 08, 2022 at 03:21 PM

GH

“Christine and I met in Kansas City, where both of us had traveled to take a class about how to teach Environmental Economics in Eastern Europe. I ran a program the EPA funded where we created Environmental Management Training Centers in Poland, Bulgaria, Hungary, Russia, and Ukraine. I sent people like Christine from EPA to train their counterparts in agencies over there. My good friend Volodymyr posted the photo (I'm impressed he could find it - the work we did there was before digital photos) of one of those classes in Poland. He lives in Kyiv, so he was fortunate to have enough electricity to send it.

Christine and I both sat in the back of the class in Kansas City, so, like schoolchildren, we were able to whisper about the class and the other students. Some of the students were men who thought a lot of themselves; they spent time in class showing off how much they knew. Christine called them "chest pounders," and a friendship that spanned over 20 years was born.

My work brought me to DC a lot back then (I lived in Vermont) and Christine was always happy to let me stay at her place. After the work in Eastern Europe ended, my son went to school in northern Virginia and ended up living there, so visits to Christine were at least an annual affair. I had tentatively planned to come for a visit the week she died, it was just before my son's birthday, but the plans never solidified. I'm glad I called her to talk about it when I did... just before she was having a big dinner party for friends from Michigan. She was in her element when we spoke - getting ready to entertain with a big dinner was one of her favorite things to do.

I miss her - her wit, her generosity of spirit, her insights into all the messy politics in Washington. The last few years have been hard for her, so I know she's in a better place now. Rest in peace, Christine.

Gwendolyn Hallsmith - December 04, 2022 at 11:45 AM

VO

“ 1 file added to the album *Traveling*



Volodymyr - December 04, 2022 at 10:08 AM

SA

“ 2 files added to the album *Traveling*



Sue Augustyniak - December 03, 2022 at 03:31 PM

SA

“ 5 files added to the album *Holidays*



Sue Augustyniak - December 03, 2022 at 03:22 PM

JB

This was such a wonderful Thanksgiving dinner/family reunion! What a blessing that we were all able to be together.
Joan

Joan Baker - December 03, 2022 at 05:42 PM

SA

“ 7 files added to the album *College Roommates*



Sue Augustyniak - December 03, 2022 at 02:06 PM