



Chris Kokenes

February 17, 2020

Chris Kokenes, beloved Husband, Father, Friend, and Co-worker was taken away from us way too soon after a courageous battle with a rare form of cancer on February 17th, 2020.

Chris was born October 25th, 1962, in Brooklyn, New York, to the late Carole Economakis and Gustave Kokenes. He was raised in his beloved Brooklyn, which was a source of immense pride, and graduated from Brooklyn College with a journalism degree, kicking off a 28-year career at CNN, first as an intern, then working his way up to managing the New York Assignment Desk. Chris loved his job and was known as a level headed and decisive force when major stories hit and all hell broke loose around him. He was a beloved colleague known for his consummate professionalism, thoughtfulness, and immense kindness. It was a natural fit for him, as he was a died-in-the-wool newshound who loved reading The New York Times from cover to cover and debating politics with the best of them.

Chris loved Jimi Hendrix, The Beatles, science fiction, baseball, comics, Public Radio, and big family gatherings with his extended family from Toronto, which he missed having from childhood, but rekindled as part of Kitty's wonderful clan. He commented on how he finally felt home again after many years. Chris carried a photograph of the piles of shoes at the front door at holiday gatherings in Toronto to remind him always of that feeling. It filled him

with immense happiness.

If you asked him, however, he would unequivocally say that his greatest achievement in life was being Kitty's husband and a stay-at-home, doting dad his beloved son, Luke, who was the light of his life. Chris was also one-fifth of a group of life-long friends since childhood who are still together to this day, thanks to him. He was the glue. Always will be.

Chris was extraordinarily kindhearted and caring. He loved his family and friends with a fierce passion, and will be remembered for his warm smile and for always putting others first. He was also very proud of his Greek heritage and loved traveling the world with his family, especially spending quality time at the beach with Kitty and Luke. He cared deeply for the greater good, our country, and for making that extra effort in doing the right thing.

Chris is survived by his loving wife Kitty, who was by his side, and their 3-year-old son Luke, his proudest achievement. He is also survived by his brother John, sister Electra, and an extended family of nieces, nephews, cousins, and lifelong friends. We will all miss him terribly. Chris is now part of the universe, of which he was always and forever in awe. Just look up at night sky, he'd say.

A memorial service will be held on February 29th, 10 AM at Barrett Funeral Home, 148 Dean Drive, Tenafly, NJ 07670.

In lieu of flowers, the family would greatly appreciate donations to be made in Chris' memory to the NY Press Club (<https://www.nypressclub.org/in-memoriam-chris-kokenes/>),

Villa Marie Claire Hospice (<https://www.villamarieclaire.org/ways-to-give.aspx>) or Memorial Sloan Kettering sarcoma research (<https://giving.mskcc.org/sarcoma>)

Previous Events

Memorial Service

FEB **29**. 10:00 AM (ET)

Barrett Leber Funeral Home


148 Dean Dr

Tenafly, NJ 07670

(201) 568-8043

<https://www.barrettleberfuneralhome.com/>

Tribute Wall

 Megan
Pitt-
Kenney

“ *We will always remember you Chris. You will be so deeply missed by Tom and I. I say hi to you every night when I look up at the milky way here in New Zealand. Much love to Kitty, Luke and his friends and family. Love Meg & Tom K xxxx*

Megan Pitt-Kenney - March 01, 2020 at 11:07 PM

 Steve
Nguyen

“ *Dear Chris,*

Our family loved you as our own. You were a good man, and I wish we had more time to spend. I will be there to ensure Luke loves Jimi Hendrix, comics, and great literature just as you did, and that he grows up to do great things and to become a good man, just as you were. Your memory will live on with him. You're with the universe now, rest in peace

- your brother in law -Steven.

Steve Nguyen - March 01, 2020 at 09:24 AM

IG

“ Chris was like a brother to me. We became friends through his mother, who was a very good friend of mine for over 30 years. I adored his mom and through her grew to love Chris very much. He was an amazing son! My family grew to love him as much as I did. We spent time together when we would go on vacation to New York. He came to Florida and stayed with us. We had such a great time and he promised to come back. Then he met Kitty, who was the love of his life. We were ecstatic for them both. With great joy we shared with them one of the happiest days of their lives. The day they got married. We are thankful that he found her. Thankful for the gift of Luke to them both. We are also thankful for the time that we spent with him. On one of our trips to New York, he took us all over the city, while my daughters, son in law, and I shopped and dragged him all over. He gave us the VIP tour of CNN. Always patient and just happy to be with us and be a part of the Gallego road show. We are forever grateful and blessed to be a part of your life. We will miss you Chris. You will be always in our hearts. Kitty and Luke, we love you and wait for your visit in Florida. The Gallego/Reyes Family.

Iris Gallego - February 28, 2020 at 07:24 PM



“ Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Chris Kokenes.



February 28, 2020 at 05:00 PM



“ *Dreams From the Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of Chris Kokenes.*



February 26, 2020 at 09:34 AM



“ *This is devastating news. I'm shocked and saddened. I've known Chris since the day he started working at the New York bureau. Chris ran the New York news desk with great calmness and ease no matter the circumstances. He had a wonderful disposition on life and the patience of an angel. Chris was always very kind and helpful to me. He will be dearly missed by all who crossed his path. I extend my love to his lovely wife Kitty, his beautiful son Luke and his family and friends. Kitty and Chris would have celebrated their sixth wedding anniversary on May 4th and Luke will turn four on July 26th. May they find the strength to continue with life from their many happy memories of this great gentleman. I share this beautiful photo of Kitty, Chris and Luke celebrating their first Father's Day. On that day, Chris said, "I am the happiest man in the world" and that he was. My heart aches. Rest in peace my dear friend. My most sincere condolences and much love to all. 🕯️🙏*



Joe Capolarello - February 25, 2020 at 10:31 PM

DJ

“ Wonderful kind, and sincere person, proud to be his friend. My his memory be for a blessing. What a loss, so sorry to hear the news of such a young vibrant person.

David Jasse - February 24, 2020 at 12:50 PM

CB

“ Chris has always been a great relative and friend to us💖 from his bachelor days and coming over Christmas Eve and Thanksgiving! But his greatest achievements were Kitty and Luke💖 we will miss our Thanksgivings together but he will always be in our hearts💔 may he rest in peace🙏

Clare and Larry Bertoli - February 24, 2020 at 11:10 AM

CL

“ MAY HIS MEMORY BE ETERNAL
LOVE TO ALL OF HIS FAMILY!💖 Cindy Kokenes

Cindy Kokenes(sister n law) - February 24, 2020 at 08:48 AM

Zack Elliott

“ Chris was just an easy going guy who possessed that warm smile and a gentle heart.



Zack Elliott - February 21, 2020 at 11:48 PM



“ I'm still in shock, and so sad about chris'spassing. Too soon. He was a gem to work with, talking to him mornings at 630am, asking him if he wanted his coffee. He always did! Many great memories. I'm sure he was a great dad and husband. He was a great co worker. A privilege to now him and work with him. God bless.

Jack Woodbridge - February 21, 2020 at 07:12 PM




“ Chris was the sweetest & kindest guy around.He was a great family man like his mother was! I always told him that. I was proud to call Chris my cousin. When my sister Vivian got sick from the same cancer that Chris he came to the hospital and hospice to see her.That was so kindhearted of Chris and when Chris and Kitty found each other we were overwhelmed with joy for him and when they had Luke that joy Chris and Kitty had spread around all of his family and friends. I will never forget Chris!! and Kitty and Luke are family so we are all there for them. I Love you Chris you have found a place in my heart that will always be there. Rest in Peace dear Cousin till we meet again... Love Electra Zogan

Electra Zogan - February 21, 2020 at 02:09 PM

CL

MAY HIS MEMORY BE ETERNAL 🙏 LOVE TO ALL OF THE FAMILY, CINDY KOKENES

Cindy Kokenes(sister n law) - February 24, 2020 at 08:31 AM

 Ulla
Schulz

“ *there are nice memories of new york, chris was a great person, .. a lot of strength from the family, at some point we will all see each other again*



Ulla Schulz - February 21, 2020 at 01:07 PM

 Georgia
Savas

“ *In a business filled with ego and crankiness, Chris stood out as a solid citizen who did his job without a fuss. His smile and positive disposition brightened up the newsroom. Love and light to his family.*

Georgia Savas - February 21, 2020 at 10:34 AM

HU

“ *El Señor lo tenga en su gloria.*

Hugo - February 21, 2020 at 10:18 AM