



Amy Katherine Belvin

February 8, 1953 - July 9, 2023

AMY KATHERINE BELVIN

Amy Katherine Belvin, 70, of Lexington, KY passed away peacefully Sunday, July 9th, 2023 surrounded by family.

She was born in Cedar Rapids, IA to Anne Belvin Kleeb and William W. Belvin. She grew up in Louisville, KY and later earned a B.A. in Women's Studies from the State University of New York at Old Westbury. She spent much of her adult life in Oakland, CA with her ex-husband, James H. Altenberg, working as a union organizer with the Socialist Workers Party, and later as an elementary special education teacher. She tragically developed multiple sclerosis in mid-life, and ultimately moved to Lexington, KY to be with her mother, her sister Fran A. Belvin, and brother-in-law Richard N. King.

Amy had a life-long passion for the arts. She both taught and practiced painting, even when it became a challenge due to her illness. She was an aficionado of the theater, especially of Shakespeare and the German Expressionists. She was an avid fan of film and television, with an eclectic taste ranging from the Busby Berkeley musicals to Star Trek to The Price is Right.

Her strong spirit and her passion for social justice led her to fight for

marginalized individuals and communities wherever she was. Even in her last years, when her health was failing, she was an advocate for her caregivers, supporting their efforts to improve their working conditions.

Her unapologetically progressive ideals, as well as her dry sense of humor, endeared her to members of her spiritual communities at Ahava Center for Spiritual Living, the Unitarian Universalist Church of Lexington, and her Buddhist Sunday Sangha.

She had a permanent soft spot in her heart for cats of all stripes, and in her later years volunteered as cat petter at the Lexington Humane Society. She is survived by many beloved felines.

A celebration of Amy's life will be held at 2:00 pm Saturday, August 26 at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Lexington, Lexington, KY. Memorial contributions can be made to the Lexington Humane Society and the Unitarian Universalist Church of Lexington.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

AUG **26**. 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM (ET)

Unitarian Universalist Church of Lexington
3564 Clay's Mill Road
Lexington , KY 40503

Tribute Wall

KA

“ Amy followed her heart, and then she jumped in with both feet. Amy and I were both active members of the Socialist Workers Party when we first met, and for a time we were both members of the same union, the International Association of Machinists. She was a fierce partner fighting alongside women standing up for our rights, or workers organizing against dangerous job conditions.

When Amy moved to Oakland, we found out how much we enjoyed in common. Cats, of course. Amy and Jim, her then-husband, were always on the lookout for adventurous local theater productions of Shakespeare, Brecht, and the Greek classics. In the summer we often met for a picnic before a play in the park. Amy was a social organizer who brought people together. It was Amy who first learned of Community Supported Agriculture, and who connected us to Full Belly Farm in California's Central Valley. For over 30 years we have picked up a weekly box of produce, and this subscription base is the financial backbone of the farm, a new idea at the time. Amy especially enjoyed those big bunches of greens throughout the winter, juicy tomatoes in the summer, and, for many of those years, every week I picked up and delivered their box as well.

When Amy could no longer work an industrial union job, she worked as a special-ed teacher in a nearby elementary school. Allendale School is working class, 97% of students are categorized Minority. Amy's classroom was a pre-fab in the parking lot, and she took personal responsibility for the daily toilet paper supply. Her identification with children who struggled to learn, despite disability and deep disadvantage, was complete, and Amy loved her work. Sometimes I would see her motoring her chair alongside a major street on her way home from school, or from one picket line to another during the Oakland Teachers Strike of 1996.

As her disease advanced, loss of her job and those broad daily connections that make an impact were a terrible blow. Her world became way too small for Amy's big heart. I remember well visits from Anne, her mother, and from Fran, her sister. I am grateful to

her family and friends, and for that community embrace that she found in Lexington. My condolences.

KathleenDenny - August 22, 2023 at 12:44 PM

RK

“ I first met Amy in the summer of 1981 during a tour to Cuba organized by the Young Socialist Alliance. As supporters of the Cuban Revolution we wanted to see up close what workers and peasants had accomplished there. At the time I was living in New York and Amy in Arizona. As we each moved from one city to another over the years, we'd touch base at annual conferences organized by the Socialist Workers Party of which we were both members.

She was living in the San Francisco Bay Area when I moved to Oakland in 1988. Shortly thereafter her then husband Jim joined her there

My wife and I shared with Amy and Jim a love of theater and good food.

Amy and Jim particularly loved the plays of Berthold Brecht and were always on the lookout for performances by local troupes. We were all sure to go. Every year they'd travel to Ashland, Oregon for the Shakespeare Festival.

As her multiple sclerosis progressed, outings to the theater or a concert became more difficult to organize, but we made up with eat-in dinner and video movie nights.

I remember Amy as a cheerful person, quick to laugh, but also quick to express her anger and solidarity when she'd see an injustice towards others. She was committed to help change the world and along with the working class she was part of, create a better world. -
Robert Kopec

Robert Kopec - August 21, 2023 at 06:18 PM

DA

“I only met Amy once...I was on a Militant/Pathfinder Sales team in the middle 1990's and stayed with her and Jim Alternburg whom I knew from the branch of the Socialist Workers Party that was in Charleston West Virginia, years before. Anyway, although this is many years later, I remember finding Amy extremely kind, friendly, warm, and hospitable. Her, I, Jim and others had several very pleasant nights talking about everything from politics to literature. She was a wonderful person.”

David Anshen - August 17, 2023 at 03:06 PM

FB

“Amy was my only sibling. We were each other's person for the first 18-22 years. We depended on each other and did fun, creative projects as kids. Then geography and life choices drew us apart for 30 years. At 55, after suffering from MS for 20 years already, Amy moved back to KY, to a nursing facility, and we reconnected. For the past 15 years I've been her caregiver and advocate. Now, with her death, I've spent time going through her poems, paintings, and photos, remembering our childhood adventures and learning about her political work and life in the SF Bay Area with ex-husband, Jim. It has been an honor, a challenge, and a sacred learning process to accompany her for these final years. ❤️

Fran Belvin - August 15, 2023 at 11:26 AM

LP

“It was an absolute honor to get to meet and talk to Amy in her later years. Her determination carry on and continue to attend church and other gatherings was an inspiration to us all. She continued to make us smile during her illness. Our condolences to her family and friends.



Linda Porter - July 22, 2023 at 03:24 PM

MG

“ I knew Amy when we were teenagers. Two years older, she showed me what uninhibited thought and action looked like. In life, she used her powers to help others. May her memory be a blessing.

Marta Gwinn - July 15, 2023 at 11:29 AM

FB

Thanks for your comment, Marta💕💕

Fran Belvin - July 16, 2023 at 08:44 PM

SK

“ Stephen King lit a candle in memory of Amy Belvin



Stephen King - July 14, 2023 at 08:17 PM

SK

“ We are very sorry to hear of Amy's passing. Please accept our condolences to you and Richard.



Stephen King - July 14, 2023 at 08:14 PM

FB

Thank you, Steve and Donna❤️

Fran Belvin - July 16, 2023 at 08:20 PM