



Christine Essex

February 10, 2024

Christine Jean Essex passed away on February 10, 2024, at her home in Tampa, Florida, after a battle with lung cancer. She was born in Hackensack, New Jersey on November 15, 1953 to Louise and Edward DeAppolonio, and was raised in nearby Paramus.

Chris graduated from Paramus High School in 1972 and earned a bachelor's degree in special education with a specialty in autism from Glassboro State College (now Rowan University) in 1976.

Later in 1976, Chris married her high school sweetheart, Randy Essex, in an elegant ceremony in northern New Jersey. After the first of what would be multiple cross-country moves, they began their lives together in Berkeley, California, where her husband finished his graduate studies. They then relocated to Montgomery County, Maryland, where Chris assisted autistic children at Christ Church Child Center (now Ivymount School). In 1984, the couple moved back to California, this time to Irvine, where Chris completed a master's degree in counseling psychology and marriage, family and child therapy at Chapman College. In 1986, they relocated to Oakland, California where their beloved son, Stephan, was born. There Chris partnered with a renowned colleague to launch the Center for Work and the Family, where Chris' practice addressed work-family balance issues for families and for employees of several Fortune 200 companies. After 11 years in the Bay area,

they returned to Rockville, MD so that Stephan could be closer to his grandparents. Chris continued her work-family practice there, focusing on employee wellness programs for biotech and media companies, as well as for federal agencies that included the CIA, the NSA, the TSA, the Defense Intelligence Agency, the Departments of Labor and State, the Patent and Trademark Office, and the National Institutes of Health. During this time, her son graduated high school and later earned a bachelor's degree in material science and engineering from Cornell University.

For 12 years, Chris and her husband enjoyed a summer home on Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts, an emotional retreat they shared with family and friends. Chris reveled in the placid, uncomplicated way of island life. In 2013, Chris and her husband moved to Tampa, Florida, where they resided until Chris' death in February 2024.

Chris was one of those remarkable people whom everyone adored. Her endless compassion and emotional intelligence helped others feel supported and cared for, a trait she passed on to her son. Chris' helping instinct was evident as early as age 16 when she put her own needs aside as she guided a blind student to high school classes every day. Chris enjoyed a wide circle of dear friends and had an easy rapport that forged loyal friendships with shopkeepers, home help, and even the mail delivery personnel!

Chris will be remembered for:

1. Her love of black and white design, while emotionally she was all about the gray.
2. Helping others make sense of their emotions and circumstances – creating “Aha” moments that changed their lives.
3. An exquisite interior design vision resulting in homes that looked like House Beautiful.
4. Her signature eggplant parmesan, turkey chili, and extra fudgy brownies (tip: slightly under-bake them!).

5. A mothering instinct so honed, her son joked that his Mom turned Pro.
6. Shoes! A collection that rivalled Amelda Marcos'.
7. Insane organization skills – she was 3M's greatest customer.
8. Masterful, laser-driven bargain hunting.
9. Thanksgiving dinners that anchored the family's connections.
10. Selfless devotion to family, including caring for her 96-year-old mother in her own home for over 2 years.

Chris was predeceased by her mother, father, and father-in-law, Norman Essex. Chris is survived by her husband, Randy; her son, Stephan; her brother, Val DeAppolonio and his wife, Barbara; her "sister in love" Lauren Essex, mother-in-law, Lillian Essex, and an extended group of nieces, nephews, cousins, friends, and many more who admired her.

Chris will be remembered as a force of nature; strong, determined, loyal, with a sharp wit, oh-so-intelligent and yet so warm and loving. Her style, spirit of generosity, and keen insights will continue to inspire those who knew and cherished her. May her memory be forever a blessing.

The service to honor and celebrate Chris' life will be held on February 16, 2024, at 10:00 am at Jefferson Funeral Chapel in Alexandria, VA. Chris will be laid to rest at a site on Martha's Vineyard.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

FEB **16**. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Jefferson Funeral Chapel
5755 Castlewellan Drive
Alexandria, VA 22315
(703) 971-7400
info@jeffersonfuneralchapel.com
<https://www.jeffersonfuneralchapel.com>

Tribute Wall



“ Jefferson Funeral Chapel created a Tribute Video in memory of Christine Essex



Jefferson Funeral Chapel - February 14, 2024 at 03:16 PM

JK

I have many fond memories of Chris. At a time when I was a young new mother 34 years ago, Chris led Mother Support Groups in her Oakland home. It became my anchor with the opportunity to meet like minded new moms several who are still very dear friends. Chris was a lovely kind woman who impacted the lives of many. Janet Kaufman

Janet Kaufman - February 14, 2024 at 09:25 PM

GC

What a GIFT Chris was to Jim and I and to all those who were a part of her life! She always had a way of making everyone that surrounded her feel special!! She always looked at the positive side of life with Compassion, Charm, Warmth, Fun and Love!! She was oozing with Beauty, Style and Grace, both in how she Looked and how she Decorated. She was such an Amazing Wife, Mother, Daughter, Sister, and Friend!!! We will certainly miss her Smiling Beautiful Face and will always Cherish the Wonderful memories that we enjoyed together with her!! Our Sincere condolences to Randy, Stephan and Family. May her memory be a blessing and may she rest in peace. We love you Chris.....Gail and Jim

Gail and Jim Colen - February 16, 2024 at 02:58 PM



“ *Jefferson Funeral Chapel created a Webcast in memory of Christine Essex*



Jefferson Funeral Chapel - February 11, 2024 at 08:56 AM

LL

Chris had the ability to see the Special in each and every person she met. I miss you and love you every day.

Linda Long - February 12, 2024 at 09:55 AM

RC

REST IN PEACE MY COUSIN CHRIS ! YOU WILL BE SORELY MISSED BY ALL . THE VIDEO WAS OUTSTANDING AND SO WERE THE WORDS SPOKEN LOVE COUSIN RICHIE AND MY FAMILY

Richard Caravaglia - February 19, 2024 at 01:45 PM

MF

“ Chris was like the sister I never had, at a time of upheaval in my young life. She took me in as her "roommate" in Rockville when Randy had to travel a great deal for work. We even made road trips to Paramus to visit her mom and dad a few times. She invited me to spend my spring breaks with her in Irvine and later, welcomed me and my husband to visit in Oakland when she was a mother to toddler, Stephan. After my life got busier with work and raising kids, our contact changed to occasional calls, then holiday cards and letters. I am so sad that we lost touch. I had recently looked to contact her online and just started to search through social media. I clearly missed out on continuing a dear friendship and am so very sorry for the loss felt by all who loved and cherished her. She lived such a beautiful life. She was such a beautiful soul and I am blessed to have had her as a friend, role model and mentor. My sincere condolences to Randy, Stephan and all her family.

Mardi Folks - August 21, 2024 at 02:46 PM

BD

“ You wore your Glass Circles around your neck
The circles of Life
when we think of the most prominent circle
We think of the Moon
You Are Our Moon.
In the depths of so much darkness each night
it hangs in the sky above us so radiantly, it is constant.
never without a glow, and never misses an appearance.
You never missed an appearance.
You have helped everyone in their darkness.
You WERE THE MOON
with the beauty of your words, and the amazing light that you have
you gave each hurting soul continual LIGHT
you gave your family, the Brightest light of all
Not many can say, that they had the MOON in their lives
WE CAN
You will Never be out of our sky,
We will look up each night and say "I LOVE YOU"

Barbara DeAppolonio - March 06, 2024 at 03:31 PM

DC

“ Dorane Caravaglia lit a candle in memory of
Christine Essex



Dorane Caravaglia - February 18, 2024 at 08:26 AM

DH

“ Rest in Peace, Chris. There are many memories of our growing up, cousin. Many weekends spent at my grandparent's lake house (swimming, drives in Donna's convertible, wandering in the woods with our dog Bristles, sticky buns from Worthington's Bakery). I always envied your bubbly personality and outgoing nature.

Debra Heinzelman - February 16, 2024 at 11:15 AM

SL

“ One of the greatest privileges of my life was to call Chris my friend. It is impossible to share just one memory of Chris. Because I could share thousands of memories of her. Her very bright light lives on inside of everyone that knew and loved her. I LOVE YOU CHRIS!



Susan Lemoie-Zarba - February 16, 2024 at 10:03 AM

MF

“ My dear Chris..You were the most wonderful friend and I will miss you so much. I am so thankful to have the wonderful memories that we shared in Martha's Vineyard. Most of all I will treasure your kindness, love and understanding..sending my love and sympathy to all.

Michelle Fitz-Randolph - February 13, 2024 at 12:21 PM

ER

“ I am so very very sad to hear about the passing of Chris. She was my counselor for 23 years. She meant a lot to me. She always made me see things clearer and she brought me so much peace over the years. I will miss her so much. :(



Erika - February 12, 2024 at 05:22 PM

BF

“ We are so saddened to here of Chris’s passing. Our sincere condolences Randy to you and your family. Barbara and Jack Fagan

Barbara Fagan - February 12, 2024 at 05:07 PM

LL

“ Chris made everyone feel how special they are because she saw the Special in each person she met. I miss her and love her each and every day.

Linda Long - February 12, 2024 at 10:05 AM

LO

“ My dear wonderful friend I will miss you forever.
You were my calm I love you Chris ❤️❤️

Lucy Orr - February 11, 2024 at 06:26 PM

LO

“ *Lucy Orr lit a candle in memory of Christine Essex*



Lucy Orr - February 11, 2024 at 06:22 PM

WP

“ *I am so grateful to Chris for supporting me and my many colleagues as a work/life strategist over the last 20+ years. We all benefited from her unique ability to get to the core of the issue and offer pragmatic guidance. She raised our self-awareness (remember the biodots?), taught us to BREATHE, and showed us how to really be present and involve all of our senses while savoring a single Hershey's kiss.*

She helped us LEAN INTO our emotions ("you have to honor the process"), taught us the importance of developing good self-care routines, reminded us to go beyond "black and white" thinking and consider the "gray", and she supported our grief process during life's transitions.

And now we must take those lessons and tools she gave us to honor her life and her unique gift of making ours better. You are one-of-a-kind and will be dearly missed, my friend. We love you, Chris!

Wendy Penry - February 11, 2024 at 04:04 PM

BM

“ Chris you will be missed beyond words , the most genuine, generous person I know , Dear Lord give Randy and family the strength they need at this time 🙏🙏🙏 Brenda Masut



Brenda Masut - February 11, 2024 at 03:21 PM

SE

“ Whenever i see black and white clothing, decor etc i;ll think of chris. We had very similar taste... that's how we originally met, when i commented on her clothes! RIP dear chris.
Sheila eatroff

sheila Terkel eatroff - February 11, 2024 at 12:47 PM

JB

We are so very sad to hear of Chris's passing. Please know we are praying for you Randy and your family. Rest in peace Chris.

Jim and Jo Barrett - February 14, 2024 at 03:24 PM