



Keith Albert Smith

AUG 19, 1948 - APR 15, 2022



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There are no words to express how much Keith will be missed or how often he will be remembered.

Keith, 73, born in Columbus, Ohio on August 19, 1948, lived his childhood in Hialeah, Florida. He moved back to Grove City, Ohio in 1959. In high school he played the string bass, sousaphone in marching band, and the Jimmy Stewart role in the play "Harvey". Keith later lived in Chicago, Barrington, and Grayslake, IL, before moving back to Galion, OH. He and Tracy purchased a 46 acre farm there where they raised goats, sheep, peacocks, ducks, geese, chickens, two steers named Chuck and Porter, Australian Shepherd dogs and dozens of cats. In the early 2000's Keith moved to the Columbus area. On April 15, 2022, Keith left this world when he was unable to recover from an aortic tear.

Keith will be remembered for his deep love of his family and friends; his loyalty; and his generous, selfless soul. He had extensive knowledge and interest in the natural world. He was particularly fond of exotic reptiles and insects and mammals, starting with an iguana in college, and a skunk named Flower. He could tell you the scientific and common name and habits of an obscure insect, bird or reptile, but did not have any idea where he put his car keys. Over 25 years after receiving his undergraduate degree in Anthropology and Biology, Keith went to Ashland University for a Bachelor + in Life Science and was awarded his formal teaching certification in 2005. He had a passion for teaching and making a difference in the lives of his students. He loved sharing his live collections with his students which included various snakes, lizards, sugar gliders, hedgehogs, turtles, skinks, axolotls, frogs, tortoises, tarantulas, Madagascar Cockroaches, and other insects. He and his students took part in the annual Backyard Bird Count for Cornell University.

He treasured not only his family, but the friendships he developed with other teachers, cohorts, and their families, sharing gladly in celebrations, performances, and achievements. All knew they



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held a special place in Keith's heart. Their happiness was Keith's happiness, more than anything that he achieved by his own merit, except perhaps his teaching certificate.

Another object of Keith's abiding love was The Ohio State University, and Ohio State Football. He received his B.A. in 1971 and was a proud Lifetime Alumnus. He took part in OSU's ticket lottery for fifteen years to return to Columbus to see two games a season in rain, wind or snow, until he gained the right to purchase season tickets for the rest of his life. He took joy in bringing family and friends to games and also in making new friends with those close to where he sat. His favorite seats were in the back row of Section 30, where he could stand up on the bench and cheer for the whole game without blocking anyone's view. And occasionally a third friend who had a ticket elsewhere squeezed in.

Keith rarely drank alcohol and never used drugs, but was part of the "half a million strong" that made the trip to Woodstock, NY, in 1969. What he recalled of his time there was a lot of music, a lot of people, and a LOT of mud. If photos exist of him there, they are not among his saved treasures. When video/digital recording became available, Keith was notorious for the footage he took to document the lives of those around him.

With his ever-present Pepsi or ice tea, Keith was often the designated driver, many friends grateful that he got them safely home. He was always happy he could be part of others having fun and enjoying life. His vehicles were older, full of unidentified bags and piles of clothes, and items for current and long forgotten tasks. There was never a time he didn't have to "clear" the front seat for someone to get in. He often forgot what was in the car and added more before he set off, usually late for everything except his job. Typically hours behind for his family reunion, one of the most important events of the year to him, he would stop to buy raisin pie for his Aunt Bureda and at a highway farmstand.

His mind and sense of humor, although sometimes on a different tangent, were sharp and clear. He had a near-genius IQ. His wit often left others wondering if his comments were serious or kidding. He met Tracy Tiffany as a fare while driving a Yellow cab at O'Hare airport. They married in 1981 in Chicago and moved to Galion, Ohio, in 1987. A mentor once asked Tracy what made her decide to marry Keith. Her reply, "I knew I'd never get bored." His vocations included pharmaceutical sales rep., Chicago taxi driver, 1980 Census office manager, 13th Illinois Congressional District Field Organizer for Jimmy Carter's reelection campaign, Chicago



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Mercantile Exchange Trading Floor Specialist, and small farmer, with a 46 acre property in Morrow County. He cherished meeting Harry Chapin as a cab driver and Roslyn Carter.

Keith is survived by his wife, Tracy Tiffany, sister, Dora (Dick) Gilmore, nieces Kim (Rick) Hite, Teresa Handley, nephews Dale (Jane) Handley, and Dan (Angie) Handley, "twin" cousin, James (Karen) Turner, other cherished cousins, great-nephews and -nieces and many special friends. He was preceded in his passing by his beloved mother, Eleanor (Nutt), and father, Albert Smith.

When thinking of KEITH, always remember that HE LOVED YOU!!!



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Keith by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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