



Jan Ruth Bivens

June 29, 1952 - August 5, 2021

Jan Bivens, of Athens, passed away on Thursday, August 5th, 2021, at Huntsville Hospital. Mrs. Bivens was born on June 29th, 1952, to John Kennedy and Lillian Roush Kennedy.

Jan was born in Fort (Camp) Polk, LA where her late father was stationed with the Army. She grew up in Fort Wayne, IN, and in Indianapolis, IN. She graduated from North Central High School in 1970 and Indiana University in 1974. She was a member of Chi Omega sorority and was connected to many of her sorority sisters and friends from high school still to this day. Of Jan's many interests and accomplishments, she was the proudest of her family. She and Les married in 1981 and recently celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary on July 18. Being a loving wife, mother, grandmother, sister, aunt, and friend brought her the most joy. Her faith was strong, and she was a member of Asbury Church. She loved to dance, play cards, read, and attend the sporting events and activities of her grandchildren.

Jan is survived by her husband of 40 years Les Bivens; sons Mike Bivens (Kim), Jay Bivens (Joyce), and Jeff Bivens; daughter Katie Bivens; grandchildren Bailey Bivens, J.R. Bivens, Jessica Bivens, Jon Bivens, Claire Bivens, Logan Bivens, Bryce Bivens, and Jackie Sheehan; brothers John Kennedy and Jeff Kennedy (Diane).

Preceded in death by her parents, her son Matthew, and sister Jill Alberson.

There will be a private memorial service at a later date.

Tribute Wall



Patty
Smith

“ I am so sorry to learn of Jan's death. Her name popped up on Facebook today for having a birthday, so I wished her Happy Birthday and then clicked on her page to see what she was up to. Such a shock. Jan lived down the street from me and we both had a summer job one year at Walrod's Pharmacy. She was great. She was two years older than me and in those days 2 years was a pretty big gap so we didn't hang out together but I have nothing but good memories of her. My condolences to her family.
Patty Dice Smith

Patty Smith - June 29, 2022 at 12:04 PM



JD

“ *Jan Ruth Bivens*

Jim Diehl - September 28, 2021 at 10:05 AM

JG

“ Dear Friends, What an honor it is to capture moments of a life well lived by dear friend, Jan Ruth Kennedy Bivens. She so nobly carried out the roles of daughter, sister, aunt, career woman, mother, grandmother, and friend to us all. For over 50 years, Jan and I have experienced life and laughed, loved, and cried throughout. For all of those years, I must say that I can NEVER recall “Jan-Jan” saying that she was just too busy to listen to whatever needed to be shared, from the silliest to most serious conversations ever to be shared. Jan was just an amazing LISTENER. In all of those years, I do not recall a single argument or disagreement between us. Honest back and forth discourse, mutual respect, and lots of laughs. Always wanted to end our conversations on an up note, to the very end. And every conversation ended with “I love you!” I found a letter that Jan wrote to me for my high school SENIOR THEME, where high school seniors in clubs at North Central High School in Indianapolis in 1970 assigned a club “pledge” to collect stories from dear friends to put in a Senior Memory Book. I thought of this song when I read what she wrote: “Well I've been thinking 'bout All the places we've surfed and danced and All the faces we've missed so let's get back together and do it again.” (Click to play) “Remember the first time I met you at the Dolphin Club before our sophomore year (Summer, 1967)? I always thought that you were older than me because you were always hanging out with Rooney Grinkmeyer, Anne Stotler, and my brother. I guess he is the one who really you and me to be good friends. Of course, you were in my gym class our sophomore year, and that helped a little... By this time, we had become real good friends, and now we were really cool and walked to gym class and ate lunch together. Wow! Into our Junior Year we became even closer friends when I started pledging JUG, and we both made BABES!” We had arrived! We were officially cool! I so remember riding our bus 52 to North Central with dear friend and Jan’s partner in crime, Cinda Deeb. Jan and Cinda spent many adventurous summers in Ft. Lauderdale, Fla, and even hung out with Joe Namath. Such cool babes! Will always remember our senior year carpool, flying down the road in Cinda’s Dad’s Cadillac, blasting SPIRIT IN THE SKY! “Prepare yourself you know it’s a

must Gotta have a friend in Jesus So you know that when you die He's gonna recommend you To the spirit in the sky" So much fun that year cruising Steak & Shake, Teenville dances at the JCC in the summer, club dances, football and basketball games at North Central, parties in Cinda's basement, street dances! Summers included adventures with John, flying around town in the Comet. Good times! Then there were the days at the Kennedy home! What a fun place it was to visit, as every adventure included a session with Mrs. Kennedy. We sat in the kitchen, and would check out "who was in the dog house with Mama Kennedy": We all had only one phone in our homes, usually in the kitchen, so privacy only extended as far as the longest phone cord and closest closet. Then on to the song fest in the living room with John and sometimes Candy Cluster teaching us the latest dances. I remember singing the whole album of "HAIR" at the top of our lungs with the grand finale of "Age of Aquarius". "This is the dawning of the age of Aquarius Age of Aquarius Aquarius Aquarius Aquarius Aquarius..." "Let the sunshine, let the sunshine in, the sunshine in Let the sunshine, let the sunshine in, the sunshine in Let the sunshine, let the sunshine in, the sunshine in..." We will probably never know who talked Mr. and Mrs. Kennedy into letting a huge bonfire event be held in their side lot, but stories about what happened there are legend. Poor John and John got up at the crack of dawn to go around the neighborhood to pick up beer bott

Joan Noonan Grinkmeyer - September 02, 2021 at 04:55 PM

CJ

“ Jan Ruth, as I called her, was a welcome new friend, as we all entered Westlane Jr. High, coming from elementary schools, not knowing what was ahead of us! Just plain fun, lots of laughter, great girl-talk and being cheerleaders together made us fast friends, spending time together on the weekends, having sleep-overs and just "hanging out" as one would do at that age. We always talked on Sunday nights, trying to decide if we would be wearing knee socks or "hosieries", as Jan would put it, to school the next day! I have thought about this...I would describe Jan as "steady"! You always knew what you got with Jan Ruth Kennedy. She was such a solid, good person and a GOOD friend to have. She was a gift and I am a better person for having had her in my life. I know you are at peace, good friend. Love, Christine Isenhour Jackson ---- or to you Jan, Christina Jo

Christine Isenhour Jackson - September 02, 2021 at 12:09 PM

DO

“ From Scott Owens, Bloomington, IN In our college days, the Kennedys (John & Jan) and I discovered that we all came from homes where dancing was a great form of entertainment. Jan and I had jitterbugged at some party and realized that we were pretty good together. I believe it was our senior year at IU. One Saturday late afternoon, Jan gave me a call and asked what I was doing...to which I replied, “nothing”. She then told me to get my dancing shoes on because we were going to enter a jitterbug contest being held at the IU Student Union that evening. We got ourselves ready and made our way down to the Union and entered. There were prizes too. The competition ensued so Jan and I pulled out all of the stops and even did some fancy moves (like me throwing her between my legs) and other classic steps like that. We kept dancing our hearts out all the while staying in the competition. When the results were in, we were declared the winners by popular acclaim! We had a blast!! The biggest regret that I have is that for some reason, I took the prize home with me. It has always bothered me that I did that. Dear Jan, I know that you forgave me a long time ago, but I am still very sorry. Thank you Jan for giving me one of the most fun evenings of my life and for being my friend. Much love to you! Scott Owens

D Scott Owens - August 24, 2021 at 01:03 PM

NS

“ I Love This Picture! Jan didn't really love it, but Cindy Sheets, Gerogene Johnson, and i Nancy Story did! I Loved Jan so much--we had alot of funny moments together--some when we lived by each other,in my senior year, her junior year--i use to "throw" my canary in to her room for a minute & she thought it was funny to let him fly around the roommate, but her room-mate Carol K. just was horrified--I had a strange sense of humor! also that year, Jan & I went to a SigEp Pledge Dance together,& to this day, i don't think either one of us knew who our dates were! But, we had a fun time, but when we asked each other who we went with: well, it was fun--I think it must have been a group date! I will forever be grateful for Jan's friendship, her fun attitude,& just being around her

Nancy Hall Story - August 18, 2021 at 08:46 PM

DP

“ Jan was always such a pleasure to be around. When she and Les moved to East Limestone, I befriended her early on at basketball games. She had just started her job, and was telling me that her friends at work told her how good the food was at Jimmy's. (Yes, the strip joint) She said she was going to stop there one evening and pick up dinner. I had to tell her the truth. But we had some fun with it. I told her to go to work the next day and tell them thank you for the idea, it was the best food her family had ever eaten!!! I loved her, she was a special lady. I saw her not too long ago at the grocery store, and we just picked right back up where we left off.

Debbie Preston - August 16, 2021 at 06:59 PM

CB

“ Jan was my admin at TBE for about 4 years. She was great. She kept me and my team together and coordinated, especially our all-hand meetings. She would pick food and set up. She was great to talk too. I miss her. We know she is now with our heavenly Father. God continue keep you and your family during this time. 🙏 Carron Battle

Carron Battle - August 16, 2021 at 02:01 PM

AL

“ Jan was my forever friend. We shared so much during the years... some devastating (like the death of both our sons), but mostly laughter and joy. I'd been communicating with her during her illness. I was very concerned but she never told me she was in liver failure. I will miss her forever! Les, Katie, Jeff and family...my thoughts and prayers are with you. I was truly blessed to have a friend and soulmate like Jan. I will truly miss her. Les, in your pending surgery may God be with you! I know you will come through it well. My mom had the same surgery and came through it FINE!! I love you all and will be praying for you. ❤️🙏

Ann Leonard - August 16, 2021 at 09:50 AM

CS

“ Jan was not only a very close sorority sister but a dear friend. We kept in close contact over the years. We kept each other updated on our children and grandchildren. I was amazed at her determination to attend her grandson's baseball games no matter how she felt. Family was everything to her. One memory that I will never forget is our trip together to Hilton Head several years ago. We spent the entire time reminiscing about the good ole days at Chi Omega and had so much to laugh about. I can still hear Jan say today in her southern twang “Well girl....”. Jan was loved and respected by many and will certainly be missed.

Cindy Sheets - August 15, 2021 at 08:56 PM

TB

“ *Jan was a dear friend to all of her Chi O sisters. She always had a smile and loved being a Chi O. She will be so missed. Condolences to Les, Jeff, Katie and all of your families.*

Tonya Brown - August 08, 2021 at 09:32 AM