



Susan Smith

Mary Susanne (Baumbach) Smith died February 14, 2011.

Susan was born April 14, 1941, in Wausau and lived most of her life in Minocqua.

She passed away peacefully at home Monday, Valentine's Day, surrounded by friends and loved ones with her two trusty guard cats, Cha Cha and Yo Yo, close at hand.

Her parents were Edward J. and Mildred (McCaskey) Baumbach.

She followed her father's entrepreneurial spirit by entering the family retail grocery business where she was active for many years.

Her husband, Roger R. Smith, and brother, Richard H. Baumbach, also preceded her in death.

Susan was a history teacher after studying history at Marquette University and had a graduate degree in library science from UW-Madison.

Earlier in her life, Susan was a nun in the Sinsinawa Dominican Order. Susan loved all forms of the arts. From its beginning, Susan dedicated much of her time to the North Central Wisconsin Conservatory of the Arts in Woodruff and when the conservatory joined Campanile Center for the Arts in Minocqua, Susan became an active board member dedicated to its growth in the community.

Most recently Susan was a member of St. Matthias Episcopal Church. Susan spent her entire life on a spiritual journey. In her heart she was a gnostic who treasured many spiritual paths.

She summed up her own spiritual journey through the tale of Percival from the Arthurian Legends. Percival, once called, took up the quest to find the Holy Grail. Others decided to follow him on his journey but at a certain point, at the entrance to the great forest, he turned them back, told them that they would have to find their own path and could not follow his. The journey is about entering the deepest, darkest part of the forest alone, fighting your own battles with whatever dragons come before you, and in the end, if you are successful, receiving the prize.

You can not follow someone else's path; that only leads to an inauthentic life. Susan's friends know that she entered the forest, fought her dragons and is now in the possession of the grail.

Susan was natively smart, very perceptive, had a vibrant unpredictability, and a great sense of humor. She was extremely proud of her Irish heritage. She cared about people and nature and was deeply loyal to her friends.

Those who knew her, and loved her, already sorely miss her.

A memorial service will be held at St. Matthias Episcopal Church Tuesday, Feb. 22, 1 p.m., and will be followed by a high tea celebrating her life.