



Cristina Antonia Arias

January 16, 1959 - March 13, 2019

Cristina Antonia Arias, 60, passed into the arms of a greater universe and surrounded by love on March 13, 2019, in Fayetteville, Arkansas. She was born January 16, 1959, to Bogddy Wus and the late Eduardo M. Arias in General Roca, Rio Negro, Argentina. Cris was raised by her mother and maternal grandmother, Cristina Korch Wus. As a young child, she moved to the United States with her mother and grandmother when her mother received a scholarship to study abroad. Her mother studied at the University of Arkansas and obtained her PhD in Comparative Literature in 1967. Her Ukrainian maternal grandparents escaped post-revolutionary Russia by boat and immigrated to Argentina. Her grandmother spoke only Ukrainian and Spanish so Cris served as her English translator growing up. Her paternal grandmother was a concert pianist.

Cris attended the Fayetteville Public Schools, the University of Arkansas and received a Masters in Social Work from the University of Arkansas - Little Rock.

Cris married and had one daughter, Ashley Barker, with her former spouse, Lonnie Barker. Cris initially worked as a social worker for the state of Oklahoma in the rural community of Holdenville. She described the practice as “pioneer mental health services”, carrying medications in her car trunk and interacting with local officials. In 1995, she returned to Fayetteville to work for Ozark Guidance Center. Cris served as Director of Mental Health Services at Washington Regional Medical Center from 2002 until 2009, at which time she transitioned to the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences - Northwest Campus to assist in establishing the psychiatric inpatient unit at Northwest Medical Center. In 2018, she accepted a position with the Community Clinic.

Cris made numerous lifelong friends throughout her professional career. Her family and friends are grateful for the incredible support the Community Clinic gave her during her illness. Throughout her career, Cris was admired as a skilled clinician and administrator, passionate teacher, community activist and loving friend. Her work with the Judicial Equality for Mental Illness led to the founding of a crisis stabilization unit in northwest Arkansas. In 2019, she was named the University of Arkansas Social Work Department Clinical Instructor of the Year.

Cris found much joy in her work, traveling the world, enduring friendships, beloved pets, knitting and spiritual exploration. She had a gift for finding the hurt and healing it. The light

of the world has momentarily dimmed with her absence but her life's work and loving relationships have forged a brighter future.

Of all her roles, she most enjoyed and cherished being grandmother. She was intensely involved in her grandchildren's lives. Hateya, Kavian, Aria and Kairo were the light and soul of her life.

Cris is survived by her beloved daughter, Ashley Barker; four grandchildren, Hateya, Kavian, Aria and Kairo; and mother, Bogddy Arias.

A memorial service will be held at St. Paul's Episcopal Church on Tuesday, March 19, 2019, at 2:00 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Northwest Arkansas Crisis Stabilization Unit at <https://www.co.washington.ar.us/government/about/csu>

Events

MAR **Memorial Service** 02:00PM

19

St. Paul's Episcopal Church
224 N. East, Fayetteville, AR, US

Comments



“ I am deeply saddened by the loss of this beautiful human being, we worked together for years and she always had a sweet smile and a kind word. I loved speaking Spanish with her, at a time, when it was rare to find people that spoke Spanish. My condolences to her family, my prayers are with you. Chris will be missed by all who knew her, she enriched the lives she touched.

Mercedes DeWitt



Mercedes DeWitt - March 22, 2019 at 11:37 AM



“ A sympathy card was purchased for the family of Cristina Antonia Arias.



March 19, 2019 at 05:08 PM



“ Tamiko Rodgers lit a candle in memory of Cristina Antonia Arias



Tamiko Rodgers - March 19, 2019 at 01:44 PM



“ Thank you God for bringing Aunt Cristina into my life as child and until adult hood. It was a wonderful Blessing to seeing Aunt Cristina last year during my visit home to Fayetteville, AR last summer during the Memorial Day weekend. I want to thank you Aunt Cristina for letting me reach out to you back in 2002. I want to thank you for taking the time out of your busy schedule to talk to me during a time of my personal crisis. My father was terminally ill during that time. I was overwhelmed with my new journey in life I had accepted a new job role and I was moving to a new state. I want thank you Aunt Cristina for showing compassion and giving me the encouragement to move forward and not missing out my new opportunity in life. Aunt Cristina, you will missed by family and friends. You are Gods angel now. Bogddy and Ashley. You are in my prayers during this difficult time in the loss.

Tamiko Rodgers - March 19, 2019 at 01:43 PM



“ To my life long friend that began in High School. Time & miles separated us often, but every reunion was as if those separations had never happened. Your life's choice and dedication aided myself & family members more recently. Your directions very likely saved the life of one of my step-sons.

To Ashley, my deepest condolences to you and your babies. Your Mother was the epitome of LOVE, COMPASSION & EMPATHY.

One can live their whole life & never know any person like your Mom. I was blessed in High School meeting & becoming best friends with her & her place in my heart will never be replaced!

Annette Edelen - March 20, 2019 at 04:24 PM



“ Tamiko M. Rodgers lit a candle in memory of Cristina Antonia Arias



Tamiko M. Rodgers - March 19, 2019 at 12:56 PM



“ Tamiko M. Rodgers lit a candle in memory of Cristina Antonia Arias



Tamiko M. Rodgers - March 19, 2019 at 12:54 PM



“ Oscar and Family purchased the White Sympathy Standing Baskets for the family of Cristina Antonia Arias.



oscar raffo - March 18, 2019 at 08:05 PM



“ I had known Cristina since she was born. In fact my father the late Dr Francisco López Lima attended her birth in the City of General Roca, Rio Negro, Argentina. I remember Cristina as a lovely, happy child; she was her parents joy. I feel blessed to have had Bogddy, her mother, as a Literature teacher in high school. Bogddy was by far one of my best teachers. She became one of my best friends, a mentor and the inspiration that contributed to my coming to United States to obtain a PhD . Cristina will be missed by us and her family and by so many friends that she made along her outstanding career.
Our deepest sympathy to Bogddy, Ashley and her children.
Rest In Peace Cris.
Oscar and family

oscar raffo - March 18, 2019 at 06:39 PM



“ Healing Tears - Blue and White was purchased for the family of Cristina Antonia Arias.



March 18, 2019 at 06:26 PM



“ Cris took an introductory class in cultural anthropology from me decades ago. I had an hour between classes and I often spent a part of that hour visiting with Cris. It was apparent that she had an exceptional gift for empathy, kindness, and caring. I was not surprised that she chose to become a social worker. Helping others was a perfect professional fit for her--few of us have the capacity for compassion and strength that Cris had. Cris was there when we needed her with advice and encouragement. I echo the sentiments expressed by so many that Cris was an angel. She helped so many when they were having difficulties. Her patience and understanding were truly remarkable. Please accept our condolences. Cris' family and our community have lost a jewel.

Mary Jo Schneider - March 18, 2019 at 06:09 PM



“ I had known Cristina since she was born. In fact my father the late Dr Francisco López Lima attended her birth in the City of General Roca, Rio Negro, Argentina. I remember Cristina as a lovely, happy child; she was her parents joy. I feel blessed to have had Bogddy, her mother, as a Literature teacher in high school. Bogddy was by far one of my best teachers. She became one of my best friends, a mentor and the inspiration that contributed to my coming to United States to obtain a PhD . Cristina will be missed by her family and by so many friends that she made along her outstanding career.

Our Deepest Sympathy to Bogddy, Ashley and her children.

Rest In Peace Cris.

Oscar and Family

oscar - March 18, 2019 at 05:20 PM



“ Chris Arias was an angel to our family, as she was to many others. She was working at Northwest Medical when we had a family emergency and she helped us through it, even sharing her cell phone number with me should we need her after hours. She was a compassionate, knowledgeable health care advocate who brought as much heart to the task as she brought brain. We will always be thankful she graced our lives with her passionate care and will keep her family in our prayers. We know she will be missed by many. Rest in peace sweet Angel. The Longer family

Elaine - March 18, 2019 at 05:04 PM



“ Cris will be missed by many. Our family is thankful we had the opportunity to know her. She held us up during some of our most challenging times & we will always be grateful for her help. Her life touched and helped many. She had the heart of a angel. Rest in peace sweet Cris, we will miss you. Jerri & John Skaggs

Jerri & John Skaggs - March 18, 2019 at 03:40 PM