



Cathy Sands

February 19, 2026

Cathy Sands was born Catherine Louise Burgess on December 17th, 1945 to Joseph Coonie Burgess and Marguerite Irene (Crawford) Burgess in L.A. California. The family moved home to Oklahoma when she was a baby. Cathy spent a lot of time with her maternal grandparents during her early years. She often recounted her fond memories about spending time with them, her aunts, uncle and cousins. Cathy was a precocious girl who loved animals, reading and nice things. She graduated from high-school in Bartlesville, Oklahoma. She worked at the local theater then as a librarian.

Cathy was a proud member of the Cherokee nation. She enjoyed attending Native women's luncheons, tribal dances and games. She told funny stories about spending time with her dad's side of the family, whom she adored.

Gordon Lundberg introduced Cathy to the Newfoundland dog: her lifelong passion for the breed began.

Cathy and Gordon married on December 23rd, 1966. They had two children; Freya (1970) and Cedric (1971).

Cathy founded Riverhouse Newfoundlands as she began breeding and showing Newfoundlands. After divorce, Cathy returned to school then took a position at Phillips Petroleum in Bartlesville, OK.

In the early 1980's Cathy moved to Fort Collins, Colorado. She worked for the Platte River Power Authority before going on to work as a legal secretary for Art March. Eventually Cathy met the love of her life, Samuel Carl Sands. They married on July 10th, 1987.

Cathy and Sam were active in the Newfoundland club. Cathy was a member of both local and national rescue groups for the breed. She fostered and found the right homes for many Newfies. She was a mentor to others who chose to also foster the breed. Cathy was very passionate about research and collaboration to improve the health and longevity of the Newfoundland Dog. She contributed to this endeavor at the National level. She had to hand over the reins to others as she began losing her battle with Glaucoma.

Cathy worked for Teledyne Waterpik. Eventually she worked for Ensign Skills Center to assist and support others with vision loss.

After retirement Cathy enjoyed socializing with her friends and family and traveling. She continued to help others. Her favorites were contributing to the Senior Santa/ Secret Santa program, pet shelters and rescue groups.

Cathy passed away on February 19th, 2026 after battling dementia. Her husband followed her to the other side on February 21st. Friends and family would tell you that they expected them to quickly follow each other in such a way. Their devotion to one another was well known.

Cathy was a funny, brilliant, passionate woman. She adored dogs, cats, fine scotch, bourbon, good wine, dancing, singing, laughing, learning and educating.

Cathy was bold and honest. All of us learned that we'd get her unvarnished

opinions if we asked.

She will be greatly missed by her family and her many friends.

A celebration of Cathy Sands(she'd call it a party/wake) is planned for July 11th in Fort Collins, Colorado.

Tribute Wall

JK

“Cathy was a wonderful funny person and great friend. Thanks Patty for introducing us. I will miss her so much. She taught me many things that I will carry with me. Every room in my house has something that Cathy had given me. I see her everywhere. Condolences to her family and friends. I loved her so much.

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