



Only In Sleep

Ēriks Ešenvalds

Only in sleep I see their faces,
Children I played with when I was a child
Louise comes back with her brown hair braided,
Annie with ringlets warm and wild.

Only in sleep time is forgotten
What may have come to them, who can know?
Yet we played last night as long ago
And the dollhouse stood at the turn of the stair.

The years had not sharpened their smooth round faces,
I met their eyes and found them mild
Do they, too, dream of me, I wonder,
And for them am I too a child?

Kirsten never lost her sense of wonder. She loved the joy and imagination of childhood: the songs she learned as a Brownie, the little worlds inside dollhouses and miniatures, and the small details that invited people to look closer. "Only in Sleep" beautifully captures that enduring part of her spirit.

Celebrating the Life of
Kirsten Dauphinais

1971 ~ 2026



Kirsten Anne Dauphinais

August 8, 1971 ~ July 18, 2026

Date & Time of Service

Thursday, July 23, 2026 ~10:00am

Amundson Funeral Home
Grand Forks, North Dakota

Officiant

Pastor Mark Ellingson

Musical Selections

"Lacrimosa" (from Requiem in D minor, K. 626) -

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

"Only in Sleep" - Ēriks Ešenvalds

"God Only Knows" - The Beach Boys

"Good Old Girl" -

(from The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas)

**Recognize Potential.
Develop Ability.
Build Character.
Serve Others.**

*A distillation of Kirsten's
educational philosophy.*



Kirsten Anne Dauphinais, 54, of Grand Forks, ND, passed away surrounded by loved ones on July 18, 2026, after a long, hard-fought battle.

Kirsten was born on August 8, 1971, in Oswego, NY, to Frederick Dembowski and the late Anne Martens. She was raised with the love and support of her stepparents, Rhona Dembowski and M. Dwayne Herron. She is survived by her husband, David, with whom she shared 36 years of life and love, including 28 years of marriage; her beloved son, Jack, who brought her immense pride and joy; her sister, Erika Falle, brother-in-law, Zachary, and niece, Alexandria, who held a special place in Kirsten's heart; her stepbrother, Greg; along with extended family, friends, colleagues, and the many students whose lives she touched.

Kirsten graduated from Shaker High School in Latham, NY, in 1990. She earned her B.A. in Political Science, magna cum laude, from Colgate University in 1993, where she was a member of Phi Beta Kappa, and her J.D. from Columbia University School of Law in 1996. While at Columbia, she was the Bernstein Memorial Scholar and a member of the Columbia Journal of Law and Social Problems.

Following law school, Kirsten served as a law clerk to Judge Michael Farrell of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals before becoming an Attorney-Advisor for the United States Department of Commerce, specializing in ethics law. In 2001, she began her academic career as a Legal Writing Instructor at Howard University School of Law before joining the faculty of the University of North Dakota School of Law in 2005.

At UND, Kirsten devoted herself to humanizing legal education. She developed and directed the Lawyering Skills program, as well as Bar Passage and Academic Success. Her greatest impact, however, went far beyond programs and teaching. She created a culture where students felt seen, challenged, and encouraged.

Kirsten did not simply teach future lawyers; she helped shape the people they would become. She believed every person possessed unique gifts and untapped potential, and she had an extraordinary ability to recognize those gifts before others saw them in themselves.

A scholar of classical rhetoric, Kirsten taught students that persuasive advocacy depends on logos, ethos, and pathos: reason, character, and humanity. She challenged them to think critically, argue persuasively, and remember that the law is ultimately about people. She believed the best lawyers combined intellectual rigor with empathy, integrity, and sound judgment. Her scholarship reflected her broader philosophy that education was not merely about teaching skills but about forming people.

That same philosophy guided her work with the Greater Grand Forks Community Theatre, where she directed, encouraged, and inspired others. Kirsten believed that great lawyers and great actors shared a common purpose: understanding people, finding their voices, and connecting with others. She believed people could emerge from unexpected places and exceed the expectations placed upon them. Whether in the classroom or on the stage, she helped others find their voices, take risks, and become more than they thought they could be.

Beyond her work as a teacher, scholar, and mentor, Kirsten embraced life fully. She loved travel, great food, new experiences, and bringing people together. She approached the world with curiosity, humor, and enthusiasm, finding adventure wherever she went.

Her legacy lives on in the countless lives she transformed: the students who found confidence because she believed in them first, the colleagues she inspired, the friends she encouraged, and the people who discovered strengths they never knew they possessed because she recognized those strengths before they did.

