



Bennett "Big Ben" Sandick

OCT 23, 1947 - JAN 12, 2025



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Bennett “Big Ben” Sandick (1947-2025) was sui generis. He was an activist, an attorney, a small business owner, and a friend to all. At various points, he drove a purple hearse across the country, gave his cat to a stranger in a paper bag as he went to jail - and got the cat back - and bummed Bob Dylan a cig. Before he could legally drive a car, Ben attended the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. As a student at Columbia University, he occupied the mathematics building during the 1968 student protests. His apartment became a Weathermen safe house. Somehow, he still graduated. After attending the Northeastern School of Law, Ben established a mental health law practice in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Always looking out for the next technology, he picked up a camcorder and travelled the country as one of the first professionals to videotape depositions for other lawyers.

Big Ben lived life big. He was a cat-lover, gourmet cook, trivia enthusiast, motorhead, and Eagle Scout. He was booted from the Hotchkiss School for “borrowing” a teacher’s car to cross state lines, he was a flag Marshall at the Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course, he sponsored a car and hung out in the pit at the Charlotte County Speedway stock car races on the third Saturday of the month. Along the way, he honed his skills as a saucier and grill master and learned to make a mean Kung Pao chicken.

Ben loved playing cards. In college, he earned money as a gin rummy shark. While raising his family in Naples, FL, it was Friday night bridge. In his later years in Salt Lake City, Utah and Mesquite, Nevada, he picked up Hand, Knee, and Foot (the card game, not the disease). He was a shrewd card player with a wry sense of humor.

Ben also loved to travel. He rode a motorcycle across Europe before it was cool, toting his personal bottle of Heinz ketchup. Central America was a repeat destination. Travel helped satisfy his insatiable thirsts to learn and play. He relished meeting people from all over the world, so



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much so that in his later years he served as a Volunteer Ambassador at the SLC International Airport.

On Sunday, January 12, 2025, he took his final trip. He passed away peacefully at his daughter's home in Salt Lake City, surrounded by loved ones and his cat, Jimi Hendrix.

He is survived by his children, son Philip Aaron Sandick and his wife Colleen, and daughter Pearl Elizabeth Sandick and her husband Kyle Kaiser; his grandchildren, Penelope Jo Sandick, Bennett Crawford Sandick, and Cora Jane Kaiser; his ex-wife and close friend Patti Sandick; his sister Barbara Lynn O'Kane, and his seven nieces and nephews. He is predeceased by his sister Judith Eve Sandick; his father Herbert Sandick; and his mother Pearl Claire Eisler Sandick. In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation in Ben's honor to the Southern Poverty Law Center.



Tribute Wall

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Steven Nikitas posted:

I am sorry to hear about Bennett and Judy. I grew up on Spadina Parkway in Pittsfield where the Sandicks lived, and I went to college with Judy at Middlebury. I remember Herb and Pearl and Barbara too. I still live in Berkshire County and probably ten times a year I go for a walk up Spadina and recall what a great place it was to grow up. When we were growing up there in the 1960s, there were SIXTY kids on the street. Today, you don't see anyone out and about. It is very quiet but otherwise has not changed much. Steven Nikitas

October 14 at 9:03 AM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Bennett by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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