



## Karl Bruce Zellers

January 7, 1954 - December 15, 2020

A Renaissance man and artist, Karl Bruce Zellers, passed away on Tuesday, December 15, 2020 at Stamford Hospital after a brief illness. He was surrounded by his wife and life partner of over 49 years, Christine Belich, and their children, Zoë Paris and Zakary Hudson, who were each the true loves of his life. As the founder and designer of Zellers Design, Bruce thoughtfully committed his creative eye and refined sense of design to beautify the world around us through his landscape designs and masterplans. He leaves behind an incredible portfolio of estate gardens and exterior designs for discerning clients throughout Fairfield County, Conn., the U.S., and extending to the Caribbean. Bruce cared deeply about environmental conservation and coastal preservation, and was also a free-willed and conscientious vegetarian for nearly his whole life. Guided by his personal integrity, Bruce planted thousands of trees during his career — a reflection of his genuine dedication to nurturing the world around him.

A true family man, Bruce loved to spend time on his porch at his Shippan Point home, sharing stories about his childhood growing up in Salem, Ohio. He was born there on January 7, 1954, the son of Karl Bruce Zellers, an accomplished athletic coach and professor, and Lois Ann DeWalt, also a teacher, and loving brother to Deborah, Chesney, and Kirk. Bruce's love of going to concerts with his sister Debi blossomed into a lifelong passion for music which he shared with his children, friends, and the many strangers he

welcomed on his porch. Bruce will be remembered by all as a patient, wise, honest, generous, and kind soul who made everyone feel welcome. He always believed in supporting small business, tipping extra, and went out of his way to offer landscaping consulting to many over the years. He believed in paying it forward and employed several neighborhood kids throughout summers, coached Stamford basketball for both his children's teams, helped an Eagle Scout earn his badge, and provided design consultation for community projects.

Having grown up just blocks apart in Salem, Christine and Bruce's lives were forever intertwined, taking them through college at Kent State University, to their travels together throughout Europe, Morocco, and Mexico, and to Houston, where they restored their first home together and Bruce learned fluent Spanish. They moved to New York City, before settling in Stamford, Conn. to raise their children. A dynamic couple, Bruce and Christine enjoyed partnering on various design projects, but none best represents their distinct aesthetic and appreciation for antiques and art than the carefully curated early 20th century home in Shippan where they raised Zoë and Zak and their two standard poodles, Elvis and Balthazar.

Bruce loved sharing memorable meals with friends and family, especially in Cape Cod, where he enjoyed summer sunsets and homemade apple pies with his parents, whom he greatly admired, his siblings, and later, with his own family.

A calm and gentle figure, who always stopped to smell the roses, Bruce believed the glass was half-full in life. Lovingly regarded by many as "the world's most interesting man," he found great pleasure in the simple art of telling stories about past adventures, music, basketball, games of pool, his latest grill recipes, antiques, books, architecture, and the history of just about anything. The greatest way to honor Bruce's legacy is to let the incredible way

he lived his life guide and inspire your own — he led with patience and open arms, always saw the bright side of life, was ever willing to lend a helping hand, and found deep satisfaction in life's greatest gifts: nature's beauty, a good song, and the company of his friends and family.

Bruce leaves behind lifelong friends, from Ohio to New Orleans to Connecticut to Australia, and is survived by his wife, Christine Belich, daughter, Zoë Paris Zellers (Christine Lyons), son, Zakary Hudson Zellers, sisters Deborah Meduri (Umberto Meduri) and Chesney Gulas (John Gulas), sisters-in-law, Cathy Belich and Laura Zellers, brother-in-law Dan Belich, and many nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by his parents and brother Kirk.

The family will hold a private service and scatter his ashes at the Cape Cod National Seashore.

If you would like to leave a condolence message online, please visit the family guestbook to share memories at [www.bosakfuneralhome.com](http://www.bosakfuneralhome.com).

# Tribute Wall



“ Dear Zellers family,

*I was so very sorry to read of the untimely death of your husband, father, and brother. I retired from the First Presbyterian Church of Salem in 2019, but I often remarked that I met the most wonderful people while conducting their parents' funerals. Your family was certainly among them. I hope that you are held close to the heart of God at this heartbreaking time.*

*Blessings, (Rev.) Meta Cramer*

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**Meta Cramer** - January 04, 2021 at 11:03 AM

CA

“ Chris, Zak and Zoe,

*It is with great sadness that we learned of Bruce's passing. Such a wonderful man. Our heartfelt condolences to you all.*

*Chris, Ken, Ashley and Jonathan Anderson*

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**Chris Anderson** - January 03, 2021 at 07:13 PM

EF

“ Christine, Zoe & Zac, we were so saddened to hear about Bruce's passing. You have our deepest sympathy and heartfelt prayers.

*Mauro & Elena Fidaleo*

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**Elena Fidaleo** - December 29, 2020 at 07:01 PM



KS

“ Christine, Zoe and Zak, I am so sorry for your loss. After reading his obituary, wow what an inspiration he is. I did not know Bruce, but would have loved knowing him. You have my deepest sympathy,  
Kim Yingst Sevek

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**Kim Sevek** - December 28, 2020 at 11:05 AM

LS

“ Bruce Zellers' singular presence reflected an extraordinary perspective on the everyday experiences that many of us shared during our formative years in school, and it continued to be felt just as strongly in the longer time beyond. We watched with deep admiration as he forged his own path, which appeared to have been laid out at a young age and entirely sprung from his own unique voice, clear and secure in its purpose. It's been an honor to have known him; he was a kind and remarkable man who will be very sorely missed, and who will be remembered so fondly by so many. To Chris, Zak, and Zoe, to his sisters Debi and Chesney, and to the entire Zellers family and their circle of dearest friends - I send along my most heartfelt sympathies. May his light shine brightly onward, through you all.



*Linda Miller Sutter*

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**Linda Ann Sutter** - December 28, 2020 at 12:36 AM

GR

“ A memorable life well lived. Another favored family member gone.  
Gayle Zellers Rugh.

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**Gayle Zellers Rugh** - December 27, 2020 at 06:35 PM

JS

“ Bruce was a great friend of my brother Paul who passed away in 1971 at the age of 17. I remember he drew by pencil a beautiful portrait of my brother playing his guitar. They were both musicians. I'm sure they are together again in a better world creating music.

Chris and I graduated together from Salem High. I'm so sorry for the loss of your life partner. He was a kind soul... Big hugs to you and your family... If you come back to Ohio please give me a holler. ❤️  
Stoner829@aol.com

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**Jim Stone** - December 26, 2020 at 05:30 PM

SB

“ My heart goes out to the entire Zellers family upon learning of the untimely passing of Bruce. Growing up as a neighbor of your family, I have always followed the joys and the sorrows of your family as I know you have mine. The loss of Kirk and now Bruce in such a short period of time is so much for a family to bear. Please know that so many are thinking and praying for you at this most difficult time. Peace and love to all of you.

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**Susie Banchefsky** - December 26, 2020 at 12:37 AM

JS

“ I was not simply saddened by the news of Bruce's passing, I was devastated. Bruce and I spent an enormous amount of time together in Salem and Kent. We had many wonderful adventures. Completely separate from that, I became friends with Chris. I was able to see them become the perfect couple. Bruce was a very important person in my life at that time and I carried what I learned from him with me all these years. I would like to extend my deepest sorrow and sympathy to Chris and her family. Bruce was a tremendous person in all ways.

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**Jay Sabol** - December 25, 2020 at 11:05 PM

JW

“ Although it’s been years since I’ve seen Bruce, he was a good friend in high school. He was a gentle soul and a great person. I’m so sorry to hear of his passing.

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**Jim Wooding** - December 25, 2020 at 09:33 PM

LE

“ We are so very sorry for your loss. May his memory be eternal. The entire and extended Zellers family mourns with you. Leesa and Dave Edelstein

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**Leesa Edelstein** - December 25, 2020 at 08:10 PM



“ Chris and Bruce were among our very first friends in Shippan when we moved here over 20 years ago. We admired and adored him, his sense of community, his friendship, his brilliant artistry in the natural world; he was a dear friend and neighbor. Our deepest condolences to dear Chris, Zac and Zoe. Love, Tom and Megan Kuczynski

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**Megan Marie** - December 25, 2020 at 06:21 PM

SJ

“ Our deepest sympathy to you Christine and your family. We have always remembered your visit to us in Sweden many many years ago. The two of you left a lasting and warm impression.  
Steven Jones and Hildegun Martinsen-Jones  
Karlstad, Sweden

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**Steven Jones** - December 25, 2020 at 02:14 PM

JS

“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



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**Jay Sabol** - December 25, 2020 at 02:13 PM

NF

“ Bruce was my friend since we were in high school. He was an extraordinary person. Christine, Zoe, Zack, Deborah and Chesney, I extend my love and sympathy.

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**Nancy Fester** - December 25, 2020 at 12:43 PM

GH

“ Our sincerest condolences, Deborah and family.  
SHS Class of 1969



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**Georgia Duhan Hopkins** - December 25, 2020 at 12:14 PM