



## Laura Jean Curtis

April 16, 1961 - April 2, 2016

Laura Jean (Smith) Curtis, 54, of Staunton, Virginia, formerly of New Castle, passed away early Saturday morning, April 2, 2016 following a lengthy but courageous battle with cancer.

She was born April 16, 1961 in New Castle and grew up attending New Castle Schools. After graduating from Taylor University, Laura moved to Charlottesville, VA and while there earned a Master's Degree in Special Education from the University of Virginia. She taught in Albemarle County Schools for several years. Laura always loved the Caribbean and moved to the Cayman Islands where she taught for two years. She then settled in Staunton, VA where she enjoyed being an artist.

Throughout her life Laura was passionate about working with young children and caring for animals, especially her cat, Diamond.

Those left to cherish her memory include, three sisters, Cathy (husband: Bob) Osborne of Cincinnati, OH, Robin Abbott of Austin, TX and Kim Sievers of Evansville, IN; a step-daughter, Emily Curtis of New York City, NY; a sister-in-law, Jeanie Smith of New Castle, IN; an aunt, Nancy Bertsche of Woodburn IN; an uncle, Donald Smith of East Wenatchee, WA and several nieces and nephews.

Laura was preceded in death by her parents, Dr. Mark and Janice Smith in 1989; a brother, David Smith in 2008 and a daughter who died in infancy, Amie Smith, in 1979.

Funeral services will be held at 1:00 p.m. Saturday, April 9, 2016 at Sproles Family Funeral Home with Janet Modjeski officiating. Burial will follow in South Mound Cemetery West Lawn Addition.

Friends may call from 11:00 a.m. until the time of the service Saturday at the funeral home.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Dr. Mark and Jan Smith Scholarship Fund in care of the Henry County Community Foundation with envelopes available at the funeral home. You may send the family a personal condolence at [www.sprolesfamilycares.com](http://www.sprolesfamilycares.com).

The Sproles family and staff are honored to serve the family of Laura Jean (Smith) Curtis.

# Cemetery Details

## South Mound Cemetery West Lawn Addition

950 South Memorial Dr.  
New Castle, IN 47362

# Previous Events

## Visitation

APR 9. 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM (ET)

Sproles Family Funeral Home  
2400 S Memorial Dr  
New Castle, IN 47362  
(765) 521-2400  
toms@sprolesfamilycares.com  
<https://www.sprolesfamilycares.com/>

## Service

APR 9. 1:00 PM (ET)

Sproles Family Funeral Home  
2400 S Memorial Dr  
New Castle, IN 47362  
(765) 521-2400  
toms@sprolesfamilycares.com  
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# Tribute Wall



“ I was so sorry to learn of Laura's passing. She was a sweet lady and I enjoyed our interactions immensely. Our thoughts and prayers are with you....

*Chris Branham State Farm Agency*

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**Chris Branham** - April 20, 2016 at 09:28 AM



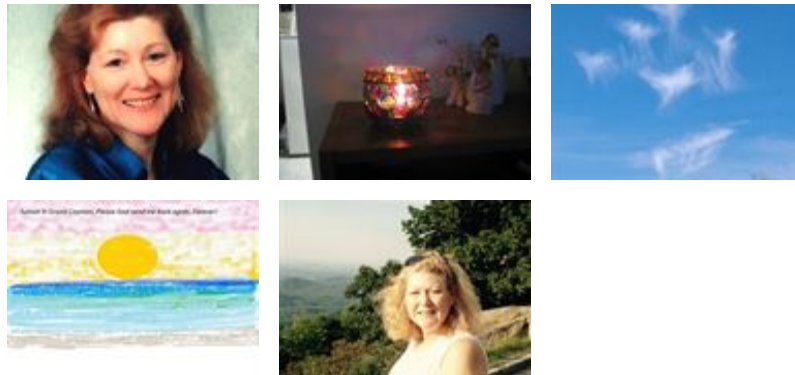
“ Laurie was passionate, brave, adventurous, and persevered through so much, loving life all the while! May all of her friends and family find comfort in the memories of times spent, her beautiful writings and mosaics, and the knowledge that she is at peace now and with her family.

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**Sandy Chamberlain** - April 09, 2016 at 08:38 AM



“ 129 files added to the album LifeTributes



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**Sproles Family Funeral Home** - April 08, 2016 at 02:57 PM

LS

“ Love, Susan purchased the Heartfelt Memories for the family of Laura Jean Curtis.



Love, Susan - April 08, 2016 at 01:18 PM

TF

“ The Smith family purchased the Lavender Reflections Spray for the family of Laura Jean Curtis.



The Smith family - April 08, 2016 at 12:58 PM

SS

“ Dear Cathy, Robin and Kim,

*I am so sorry I will not be able to join you tomorrow to honor and celebrate your sister. It sounds like it will be a beautiful, special service and your sister can't help but be pleased as can be. It was something she thought a lot about and it meant a lot to her.*

*Please know I am thinking of you and your families and my heart goes out to you. You had a smart, talented and remarkable sister, it was wonderful to get to know her better this past year.*

*Wishing you healing peace and grace,*

*Susan*

Susan Shaw - April 08, 2016 at 12:31 PM



“ Dearest Sisters:

*I can't tell you how sorry I am for the loss of your Laura. It doesn't seem possible, and yet it was anticipated most of all by Laura herself. This past year she was so calm about the chances of living beyond a year. I reconnected with her last summer after her hospitalization. She was already clear that this was the last chemotherapy she was going to take.*

*Despite nearly constant nausea, I was always amazed at how much Laura took it in stride and tried to move on with her day. I told Cathy and Bob I would have moan & groaned & complained non-stop to anyone who would have listened--daily! Laura and I were in touch pretty much every day, and after the first assessment of how she felt she would recount what she planned to do that day and our conversation moved to other things.*

*We had dinner together weekly and while we were supposed to be working through a list of things that Laura felt needed to be done, mostly to plan for when she wasn't able to take care of herself, we usually ended up just having a great "girls night out". Your sister was great company. I would have dragged myself over the mountain after work and was tired and Laura was usually tired, I would laugh because whenever I could not come up with a word, despite Laura's professed "chemo brain", she would come up with the precise word—she was sharp and conversation was lively! I got to see her art work in progress and enjoy what she called her "refuge", her lovely apartment with the mountain views.*

*Laura and I crossed paths twice through work, 20 years ago we were co-workers at Head Start, I coordinated social services and Laura was a home-based teacher. Laura reminded me recently that I took her out to meet a mother and child, we sat at a table, and the cockroaches were everywhere, crawling across the ceiling and dropping on us. Laura was wide-eyed but went back weekly to work her magic with them. She was so tender-hearted with children, it*

*didn't matter the circumstances. Ten years later at another program, I hired Laura for the summer to be a home-based teacher for special needs toddlers and their families. This time I brought Laura into a really rough home, where the 3 year old called Laura "yo bitch". Laura didn't bat an eye, and soon she was greeted with, "good morning Miss Laura". She was so warm and supportive, she taught this mom to ride the bus and meet her at the children's museum. Laura was just one of the best. You could tell she just loved working with mothers and children. They could tell too, which is why she was so great.*

*I remember that summer talking with Laura and her telling me she was struggling with serious depression, so when she was diagnosed with cancer it seemed just too much for one person. And yet again, I look back on this past year when she was so debilitated by the cancer & had so little physical stamina, and I can't help marveling at her enthusiasm for her next mosaic project, for a card she was making, for how pretty the day was, or for the Christmas presents she was so carefully matching to each person. She was sensitive, smart, opinionated, a gifted teacher, a talented artist, quick to feel jealous and hurt, quick to share her regret, funny, thoughtful, generous, and a keen observer of life and the world.*

*Last Monday when I took her to the hospital and she was settled in her bed, a young doctor whizzed in wearing a messenger bag, saying, " I'm Dr. B., your medicine man". He gave Laura a fist bump and proceeded to rapid-fire list what he was going to do, then he whipped out a knife to help me open a mayo packet for Laura's sandwich. As soon as he left, without missing a beat Laura said, "We got Patch Adams". Her quickness and wit never left her, it was perfect!*

*And now I wish you peace and healing at this time of sorrow. You can take comfort in knowing you are making all your sister's wishes come true for a beautiful service. I am so sorry I cannot be there.*

*Susan*

**Susan Shaw** - April 08, 2016 at 11:28 AM



“ *Lovely One Spathiphyllum Plant was purchased for the family of Laura Jean Curtis.*



April 07, 2016 at 10:22 PM

SP

“ *Ahhh Laura, I'm so glad we got to re-connect the last couple of years thru FB. I enjoyed our conversations. Always remember the days with you and Kathy N. R.I.P my friend.*



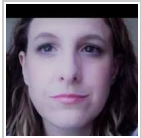
**Scott Pfenninger** - April 06, 2016 at 03:46 PM



“ *Treva Brown lit a candle in memory of Laura Jean Curtis*



**Treva Brown** - April 06, 2016 at 01:26 PM



“ *Sara Ludwig lit a candle in memory of Laura Jean Curtis*



**Sara Ludwig** - April 06, 2016 at 06:55 AM



“ Cathy, Robin, Kim and all family of Laura,

*Words cannot express our sorrow here in Charlottesville. I was friends with Laura. Thankful for visiting her about a month ago and our talk on angels and God's love looking over us all through people.*



*Words are never adequate in moments like these. I will say though, that my heart goes out to you, and we will always remember the joyous memories that we are privileged to have in knowing your sister Laura. It's said, by those who learned to know death, rather than to fear and fight it, become our teachers about life. Please know, Laura was a phenomenal teacher and taught all powerful lessons with love and compassion. She always looked forward to traveling to New Castle for holidays when she could. She loved each and every one greatly. Our loving thoughts and prayers are with you.*

*Unfortunately, I'm unable to attend services on Saturday in Indiana although we'll be there in spirit.*

*God bless you,  
Sue Smith*

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**Sue Smith** - April 06, 2016 at 04:26 AM

AW

“ *I will miss you my friend but I know you are now pain free with your family in heaven.*

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**Angela Cook Wong** - April 05, 2016 at 09:26 PM



“ *Joey Turner lit a candle in memory of Laura Jean Curtis*



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**Joey Turner** - April 05, 2016 at 07:28 PM

MO

“ *Mark Sean Orr lit a candle in memory of Laura Jean Curtis*



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**Mark Sean Orr** - April 05, 2016 at 07:15 PM

MH

“ *When I was in Jr High Laurie came out to California to stay with our family for awhile. She had a great sense of humor and I remember many times when we would find ourselves laughing uncontrollably over some silly thing. She was a wonderful artist. I still have some on the pencil drawings she made me and will treasure them always.*

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**Marcie Holder** - April 05, 2016 at 07:05 PM

KC

“ *Laura rest in peace, you are a Angel in heaven.*

*Kathy Cross-Hurst*

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**Kathy Cross-Hurst** - April 05, 2016 at 06:54 PM

TM

“ Sending condolences to Laura ' s family. She was a gentle and kind spirit♡



Tracy Tryall & Jim McInay - April 05, 2016 at 06:47 PM

JM

“ I remember her as "cousin Laurie", one of the "Newcastle Cousins" who we went to visit every thanksgiving, traveling from Fort Wayne, IN. i always thought Laurie was so beautiful, so classy...and her hair!!!! She had the most beautiful and natural blond crimps, all the way to her waist! I loved you then, I love you still! I will miss you, I know you are happy and fine and safe and loved...and I will see you again!

jennifer moore - April 05, 2016 at 06:27 PM



“ In the 4th grade, Laura and I had to share a violin. And we would go at each other, it was a pain... After a while I gave up and gave her the violin. I will cherish that memory.

Andrew May - April 05, 2016 at 06:09 PM

MA

“ I've known Laurie since second grade Mrs Wilts class at Greenstreet. She was always so sweet to everyone. We reconnected on Facebook a couple years ago. I was so glad we did. She taught me alot especially when my Mom passed away. She is flying high now. One of Gods Angels. Rip



Mary Pierce Abbott - April 05, 2016 at 01:21 PM



“ *Stacy Buggle lit a candle in memory of Laura Jean Curtis*



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**Stacy Buggle** - April 05, 2016 at 01:05 PM

CF

“ *I first met Laura in the mid 1990's when she lived and taught school on Grand Cayman, Cayman Islands. I last saw her two years ago when she visited for the last time and stayed at my vacation rental, Sea Beauty, which was her home before we turned it into a vacation rental. Laura's art was inspired largely by the ocean and beach. She was an amazing lady and I will miss communicating with her. But we shall see her in Heaven, until then, Rest In Peace, sweet Laura. My sincere condolences to her family and friends. I pray her beloved cat, Diamond, will adjust nicely to her new home.*  
*Cathy Frazier*  
*Cayman Islands*

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**Cathy Frazier** - April 05, 2016 at 10:41 AM

SB

“ *Sandy Brogdon lit a candle in memory of Laura Jean Curtis*



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**Sandy Brogdon** - April 05, 2016 at 09:42 AM

PT

“ A lot of child hood memories in such a short time . So glad we reconnected on FB . It was like we never had distance between us . You are such a strong lady and so glad we were on your journey with you . May Glad Bless you and your Family . Rest In Piece Dear Friend, Now you are free .



Patty Troxell - April 05, 2016 at 09:07 AM

CH

“ Charlotte Heard lit a candle in memory of Laura Jean Curtis



charlotte heard - April 04, 2016 at 07:17 PM

SM

“ Laura,  
May you rest in God's loving arms. Praying for your family.

Sandi Mobley - April 04, 2016 at 11:30 AM

SB

“ You took all of us on your beautiful journey. Thank you so much for allowing us to be apart of your life. Fly high with the angels my friend. your friend, Sheila Denney-Brown

Sheila Brown - April 04, 2016 at 11:23 AM



“ Laurie LOVED Hummingbirds, and asked us to watch for the first one of the season after she passed. At church this Sunday, a friend stood and quoted from the book “From Vultures to Hummingbirds, the following morning after Laurie passed.

*"It is said that both the hummingbird and the vulture fly over our nation's deserts. All the vultures see is decaying, rotting meat, because that is what they look for. They thrive on that diet.*

*But hummingbirds ignore the putrid flesh of dead animals. Instead they look for the colorful, aromatic blossoms of blooming desert plants. The vulture lives on what was, and fill themselves on on the dead and lifeless.*

*Hummingbirds live on what is! They revel in fresh, pleasant things. They seek vibrant, living things. Each bird finds what it is looking for. So do we."*

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**Rob Simmons** - April 04, 2016 at 10:44 AM



“ My thoughts are with the entire family. Laura was a brave person who inspired more people than you'll ever know.

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**Kevin Orr** - April 04, 2016 at 10:38 AM