Audrey Therese Allenspach-Kok



NOVEMBER 7, 2020

Audrey Allenspach-Kok passed away on the morning of Saturday, November 7, 2020 after a four-month battle with an extremely aggressive brain cancer. Audrey was born in Bassano, Alberta to Verna and Erwin Allenspach on February 25, 1962, the second of five children. The young family moved to Carstairs, Alberta shortly after Audrey was born and that is where Audrey grew up.

Growing up in small-town Carstairs it was evident that Audrey excelled at sports, having a natural talent for them in everything from badminton to volleyball. Audrey joined the Carstairs girl's hockey team playing defence. Audrey discovered the thrill of downhill skiing and worked at Sunshine Village during the winter and built trails there during the summer. After finishing her Bachelor of Physical Education at the University of Calgary, where she lived in residence and made lifelong friends, she became a ski instructor. Audrey moved from Calgary to Ottawa to teach skiing and in the summer was a youth worker. This solidified her passion for both teaching and working with youth.

While in Ottawa in 1987, Audrey met Ekke Kok and the two soon fell in love. After a long-distance relationship, the two came together permanently in 1988 in Calgary and were married in 1990. Following her passion for teaching and working with youth, she enrolled in the Bachelor of Education program when she returned to Calgary. After graduation, Audrey started a career as an elementary

school teacher with the Calgary Board of Education. Much like sports in her youth, Audrey found she had a talent for working with children and bringing out the best in them. Her philosophy of using kindness, compassion and empathy enabled her students to reach their potential. Over Audrey's 28-year career as a teacher at Ogden Elementary, Queen Elizabeth Elementary, Killarney Elementary, Captain John Palliser and at Griffith Woods she brought out the best in more than 600 students.

In 1998 Audrey and Ekke discovered that it was possible to ride a motorcycle around the world. While Audrey had been a passenger on the back of Ekke's motorbike since they met, she decided to take a motorcycle safety training course and obtain her own motorcycle, a BMW F650ST. All the better to explore the world (or in her words, so she could take along a hair dryer). In 2002 Audrey and Ekke took a year-long sabbatical from work and spent the year travelling throughout Europe and North Africa. Before their return, they had already started planning their next trip, eventually taking three more sabbaticals and riding around the world. Back at school Audrey was able to bring lessons learned while travelling to her students. This continued to be a theme throughout her travels, always looking for something to be brought back for her students, whether it be an artefact or a cultural lesson to be incorporated into the curriculum. In all, Audrey and Ekke visited 83 countries (80 by motorcycle) plus Antarctica. As it was Horizons Unlimited that initially fired up Audrey's imagination for world travel in 1998, she felt it important to give back to the community that gave so much to her. She volunteered at and helped organize many CanWest Horizons Unlimited Travellers meetings and presented at Horizons Unlimited meetings around the world from Thailand to Montenegro where she inspired others to explore the world.

Audrey Allenspach-Kok is survived by her loving husband, Ekke Kok, and siblings Helena Richter (Willi, Andrew, Robin), Yvonne Allenspach, Jacqueline Allenspach

(Kalin, Jill) and Alfred Allenspach (Tracy, Maggie, Gabe). And of course, the many students she has taught who carry her kindness and compassion to the world.

A Memorial Service will be held at St. Paul's Catholic Church in Airdrie on November 21 at 1:00 PM. Due to COVID-19 restrictions attendance will be by invitation only. The service will be available as a livestream on the St. Paul's YouTube channel: https://youtu.be/yvPyj7L_chE

Messages of Condolence

Our hearts break for you Ekke.

— Mike Skene

Fly Free with no pain my friend

— Sandy Meeba

Audrey and Ekke are an inspiration for us. It turns out Margo had a bike similar to Audrey's and George even bought Ekke's old bike. We also traveled overseas, followed your blogs and met at Horizons Unlimited events. We are very sad that Audrey has left us, and wish Ekke all the best.

— George & Margo Coppus

Audrey will be sorely missed. I met Ekke and Audrey through my dad Roy at the BMW club breakfasts. He was always so thrilled to read about their adventures through their blogs. She's was a nice lady. I send my deepest condolences to Ekke and his family for their loss.

— Kevin Sidebottom

My deepest sympathy to you and your family. I wish I could have met Audrey but will love to hear all the good memories you all have shared

— Amy

Ekke, I am so sorry to hear of Audrey's passing. I hope that the wonderful memories that you created together will carry you through this very difficult time. You and Audrey certainly lived a full life of adventures, travel and learning together. I am sending you heartfelt sympathy and love.

— Audrey Holliday

Sending my condolences to you, Ekke, and your family.
Wishing you many happy memories of your time travelling together across the world.

— Kim Fisher

Dear Ekke,
we're so sad to hear, what happend. We whish you power and strenghtness to manage the loss. We want to send you a lyrics from a chappel at "Großer Ahornboden/Hinterriß". We hope the translation is ok:
"We are the people on the meadow,
we are the people under the meadow,
we turn to meadow and turn to woods,
this will be a happy stay in country."

A big hug to you
Andrea and Tom

— Andrea Hubbauer and Tom Lehr

the family of our beloved Mrs.A,

My name is Sofia Ali, in 2009 I was in Mrs.A’s third grade class- I’m now in my third year of university. I can still clearly remember walking into my first day of third grade, I had just moved from Nunavut and was terrified of this huge change- but of course, Mrs.A was there for me, as she was for everyone, with open arms and heart. Mrs.A had a radiating kindness that inspired comfort & wellbeing to anyone lucky enough to be in her presence. I was deeply saddened to hear of her passing and am sending endless love and prayers to her loved ones. I remember releasing butterflies in her class, and the freeing feeling of watching their beautiful wings fly into the sky- Ill look into the sky and hope to see you Mrs.A

— Sofia Ali

I was shocked and deeply saddened to hear of Audrey's death. My deepest condolences to Ekke & family. She will be greatly and deeply missed by everyone who knew her. She was a loving and kind soul to all who knew her....

— Larry T

Ms. Allenspach-Kok taught me between first and second grade. Not long after arriving in her classroom for the first time, Ms. A seemingly made it her goal to make me feel as though I was right where I belonged. An intrepid traveller, we were able to connect over stories from Africa and her many exciting adventures exploring the world on her motorcycle. Thank you for exemplifying what it means to be a dedicated, loving, kind and caring human being.

— Leonne

My wife and I have often thought about you and Audrey and how you managed so many wonderful adventures across the world. An inspiration to take time together. My deepest condolences Ekke for your loss.

— Shane LeBouthillier

To all those who loved and will miss dear Audrey, may your memories of happy times with her comfort you, and bring you peace.

— Cheryl Hunter Loewen

I’m sorry to hear about Audrey passing away, a life cut tragically short. My sincere condolences.

— Greg Brigden

I am so very sorry for your loss. Audrey was a special person who touched the lives of so many. I had only met her a couple of times over the years, but your adventures together were legendary. I hope those memories provide some comfort during this difficult time. My thoughts and condolences are with you and your family.

— Kristina Hill

So sorry for your loss Ekke, Audrey was one of a kind and it was so special that you have such amazing memories you had made together!

Take care and we will miss her!
Sending my deepest condolences!

— Stephanie Gee

I only had the chance to know Audrey for the two years I taught with her at Killarney Elementary in Calgary. Audrey was always kind and patient and a fantastic person to work and have a chuckle with. My sincerest condolences to Ekke, and Audrey's family and friends.

— Paul Flowers

My sincere condolences. Audrey was an amazing woman, incredible teacher, and a truly decent, caring person. She will be missed by all those who knew her, and were lucky enough to spend time with her.

— Sarah Olson

Audrey’s wanderlust and adventurous spirit will remain a wonderful memory for many of us. I’m sorry for your loss, Ekke.

— Bonnie caldwell

We miss Audrey deeply at Griffith Woods School. She touched the lives of so many students and colleagues through her work as an amazing educator.

— Erin Quinn

We wanted to express our condolences to Ekke and to the families on Audrey's passing. We always looked forward to hearing of your travels and the adventures you encountered. Getting together at most of the teacher conventions downtown became somewhat of a tradition. It was always memorable for us "non-downtowners" to try some interesting eating spot that Ekke or Audrey knew of. We have countless fond memories related to Audrey and Ekke that will always be present. Our thoughts are with you all. Jean, Jim, Michael, and Emma.

— James Baldwin - Jean Lee Family

Sorry to hear about the passing of your dear wife. I know the two of you shared a lot of joyful experiences together; that should comfort you as she now lives in your heart. May her beautiful soul rest in perfect peace

— Ezekiel Dada

So sorry you have to endure this loss Ekke, may Audrey RIP. She was a wonderful lady and I will cherish our shared memories forever. You helped make her last days on earth so peaceful & enjoyable to the fullest, sharing all your travel stories once more with her. My sincerest condolences to you and your families. Her & Donna can now have breakfast meetings and talk about bike travels together in peace with no pain.

— David LaFoy

Michelle and I were deeply saddened to hear of Audrey’s passing. She will be missed.

Our condolences to Ekke and the family.

— Bill & Michelle Jackson

I had the privilege of teaching with Audrey at Captain John Palliser School for several years. Her kindness, calm demeanor and love of learning meant that she connected deeply with both students and colleagues. She will be missed by many. Sending my wishes for peace and comfort for Ekke and all of Audrey's family.

— Karen Neufeld

To breathe, to fly, to float,
To gain all while you give,
To roam the roads of lands remote:
To travel is to live.

— Ekke Kok

Having grown up across the street and in the same town as Audrey and her family was wonderful. Audrey encapsulated so many incredible qualities. Courage, love of life, family, laughter, adventure and friends. It is no mystery as to how or why she has impacted, and will continue, to impact many lives going forward. Her legacy humbles me. Much, much love to you Ekke and all of Audrey's family and many friends.

— Doug Brockway

We are sending our heartfelt condolences to you and all your family.Audrey will be missed by so many people.Bryan and I have enjoyed hearing about your many adventures and reading your travel blogs. We have a great memory of seeing you both arrive at Alf and Tracy's home in Saskatoon after a very dusty ,windy prairie day. You were riding across the country. Audrey entered the house covered in dust from head to toe with the biggest smile on her face.
We are sending our love your way.

— Bryan and Trudy Dykes

Audrey and you have been so inspirational to me. I have always spoken of your trips and adventures in my circle. It always feel good to see your amazing trips together. Having a life partner that share husband interest is truly remarkable. My thoughts are with you and your family. So sorry for you loss Ekke!!

— Zeeshan Abdy

I worked with Audrey at Killarney school. I always appreciated her positive outlook and her kind nature. She was truly meant to be a teacher and showed passion for teaching her students. I also enjoyed following your travel stories and adventures. I am so saddened by her passing and send my sincere condolences to Ekke and Audrey’s family and friends.

— Helen Hughes

It was a privilege to meet Audrey during her and Ekke's motorcycle tour 2002. In Switzerland in fact then later in Beamish. Audrey inspired me then and will continue to do so.

— David Coulson

Hi Ekke, So sorry to hear Audrey has passed. She was such a great lady. Always a positive happy force in the world. I hope you are keeping well and know that she is exploring a better place on two wheels. Out thoughts are with you.

— Doug Morgan

Dear Ekke and family,
My heartfelt condolences and deepest sympathy on the passing of Audrey.
May she Rest In Peace and we all hold on to the beautiful memories we have of such a wonderful person who gave so much to others. I still have the two Maple Leaf

— Peter Munro

Audrey was one in a billion and we consider ourselves enriched just having been part of your small family. Through all your posts, we will be able to share her adventures, strength of will, and zest for life with our granddaughters. We want our granddaughters to know the that societal norms for girls espoused the world over don't have to constrain them. Audrey is best woman to have demonstrated that women can do pretty much anything. Skiing, motorcycling, backpacking, playing a major role in the HU meetings or just dealing with Ekke’s cousin and her crazy family of rambunctious boys, she handled everything with aplomb. We will miss Audrey’s gorgeous smile and that sparkle in her her eyes. We will miss her. We love you,Ekke.

— Marion Prodaehl

Audrey will be missed by so many.

"What we have once enjoyed we can never lose. All that we love deeply becomes a part of us."

— Tracy Allenspach

Dear Ekke and Family,
May fond memories of Audrey give you the strength in these difficult moments.

Her beautiful, kind and adventurous spirit will always be remembered.

Our thought and prayers are with you and your family.

— Zorana and Kelly McDaniel

Lieber Ekke,
Sprachlos habe ich von Audreys Schicksal erfahren. Ich hoffe du hast in dieser schweren Zeit viele mitfühlende und tröstende Menschen an deiner Seite, die mit dir diese schwere Last tragen.
" Manchmal tröstet uns nur die Gewissheit, dass das Gewesene für immer bleibt. Dass die Liebe in unserem Herzen weiterlebt und tiefe Dankbarkeit uns trägt."

— Judith Ohnheiser

So happy that you were able to share so many joyful adventures together. Our deepest condolences to you and all those who loved Audrey.

— Kim Hartley & Dave Skaret

My condolences to her friends and family on your loss, and especially to Ekke. I met Audrey once at a motorcyclists meet in Nakusp and remember how warm and kind you both were to everyone. She touched many lives and will be remembered fondly.

— Michelle Lamphere

Audrey, you were a wonderful person and an inspiration to so many people. From the locals and travellers you encountered on your journeys to the children you taught in that other part of your life - your teaching. It's especially beautiful to read the heartfelt words from your former students who have such lovely memories of you and the effect you had on their lives. We will all miss you, however it's your family and especially Ekke who will feel the loss most deeply. My heart and condolences go out to you and everyone who's life Audrey touched.

— Tiffany Coates

Hallo Elke, Hallo Magda,
wir sind sehr traurig das Audrey nicht mehr unter uns ist. Wir haben am Gottesdienst teilnehmen können. Wir wünschen euch viel Kraft und Stärke für die kommende Zeit.

The wind blows a leaf from the tree
one of many leaves,
this one leaf, you hardly notice it
because one is none.
But this sheet alone
was part of our life
so this leaf is alone,
we always miss.

Liebe Grüße, wir sind in Gedanken bei Euch.
Petra und Paul-Jürgen

— Paul-Jürgen und Petra Metten

Audrey was a beautiful, kind, and caring person. She touched the lives of many people at Griffith Woods. We will all miss her greatly!

— Nancy Baines

I was incredibly saddened to hear of Audrey’s passing. I have not seen much of her in the past few years but have great memories of our talks about travel, motorcycles and teaching at Blackfoot. A beautiful soul has left us, my heart breaks for you Ekke.

— Robert Goyer

Audrey was my teaching partner and friend for several years at Captain John Palliser School.
Here is my farewell poem written for her, which, in many ways is fitting now.
She was such a kind person and wonderful teacher - she is dearly missed!

For Audrey
June 2016

A is for Ambitious
Ambition's the word
To begin my farewell
For in these few verses
Of Audrey I'll tell

It would be ambitious
Oh, yes, I concur
If I knew about things
As concisely as her

For when I run for computer
Or reference book
Audrey has the answer
Before I can look!

And yes, those who wonder
I think I should say
It's amazing what Audrey
Has memorized this way.

U is for Ugggggh
Ugggggh is the sound
Of a very long day
When you wonder if anyone
Heard anything you say

And having you Audrey
To talk, decompress
Helps balance me out
After long days of stress.

D is for Delightfuls
The “delightfuls” are students
That keep us on task
By testing each boundary
And repeating questions ask

But without a partner
The “Delightfuls” don't delight
With no one to share
Their amusing insights.

R is for Repeat
Any teacher will know
Why a teacher repeats
The instructions, the instructions,
The instructions, what a treat!

But Audrey has endured
It also being due
To repeat the instructions
To her partner teacher too!
(And for your endless patience,
I'm indebted to you!)

E is for Early
She is always in early
Which benefits me
With Audrey there first
I don't have to find keys!

On a difficult morning,
I don't mean to sound trite,
Not looking for keys,
Is quite a delight!

Y is for Year
It been quite a year
With the “what?” and “really?!”
And wiggly students
Up, down and all squirrelly

So in the Chinese tradition
Of naming the year
This one I name
Year of Patience, my dear.

This will come in handy
As you take bike in hand
And travel off into
Fantastic new lands.

The patience from classroom
You take on road
To fix wheel or engine
Or balance a load.

As so, in conclusion,
Dr. Seuss step aside
Your adventure awaits
“Oh the places you'll ride.”

Ride on, dear Audrey!

— Alison J Betty

I will always remember Audrey for her astounding wit, her compassion, her spontaneity and eagerness to play, her immense patience, and her generosity and kindness. My mind and heart hold infinite memories of 'the consecutive three'--her, Jean and myself. Three small town girls who moved to the big city for Uni, experiencing true freedom for the first time. Together we were wacky, fun-loving, free-spirited, and always up for mischief, and we developed a deep, authentic bond that carried us through moments of joy, sorrow, difficulty, and more joy. There just aren't enough words to describe the depth of honour and gratitude I feel for having had Audrey in my life. Gone way, way too soon. I love you, Auds.

— Viv Nielsen

I had the pleasure of meeting Audrey at Hugh Sutherland High School. I had no idea that this quiet, pleasant girl would grow into such an adventurous person. I am so glad that you, Ekke, were able to share those travels.
My sympathy to you and Audrey's family for this untimely passing.

— Tracy Swanby

Ekke,
My most sincere condolences to you and your family. I was blessed to have gotten to know Audrey and yourself during these past 3 years of being one of Audrey's colleagues on the Griffith Woods grade 3/4 team. Audrey was consistently kind and patient and I will always be inspired by Audrey and Ekke's Travels. I'm sure she is ripping up and down the streets of Heaven on her new bike. Praying for your peace.

— Ron van Rootselaar

I was blessed to work with Audrey in three different schools and I have so many fond memories of our times together. She had an amazing sense of adventure and always had a great story to tell about whatever she did! I will never forget her passion for teaching all children each and every day - no exceptions! Each and every student was blessed to have her as their teacher! My highest compliment for her was that I would have wanted to be a student in her class or have her teach my own children! I know that the last few months must have a challenge for both of you but I also know that the love and respect you had for each other was never more evident! Ekke - Take care and may all your wonderful memories make the hardest days more tolerable!
Sherri

— Sherri Raymond

I had the honour of working with Audrey at Captain John Palliser School. Audrey was a patient, kind, compassionate teacher. I don't remember her ever raising her voice with her students. I enjoyed hearing about Audrey's many travel adventures. She left this world a better place and will be missed by many. My deepest condolences to Ekke and Audrey's family.

— Lisa Graham-Hill

Ekke,
I was shocked and saddened to come across the news of Audrey’s passing. I remember Audrey as always being full of life and positivity. So happy you two were able to go on all your travels and you have all those wonderful memories to keep close to your heart. I wish to express my sincere condolences to you as well as to all of Audrey’s family. My thoughts and prayers go out to everyone.
Take care,
Kelly

— Kelly Thom

My deepest sympathy to you Ekke, Helena, Yvonne, Jackie & Alfie on the loss of your amazing wife & sister. My thoughts & prayers are with you during this difficult time.

— Celeste Bazinet

Walk In This World For Me

The time has come now
For me to say goodbye.
No sad farewells
Will we share
For you will live within me
And I will live in you.
No words can say
How much we care.

We've walked together
On the dusty roads of life,
But kept our eyes upon a star.
We've laughed at the little things
And cried along the way.
I've come to know
The friend you are.

Walk in this world for me!
Sing a happy melody!
And keep my memory
Not far away.
May you find
That life will bring
All the best of everything!
Take special care of you
For me today!

Audrey you will always be remembered by all the people you have touched with your beautiful smile, your helping hand and for being you. I had the honour of working with you at Captain John Paliser and enjoyed your travel stories and your encouragment about taking my own motorcycle trips. Ekke continue to walk in this world for her

— Manuela Fallon

I am very saddened to hear of Audry's passing. I followed all your travels. What an amazing life partner you have lost. My heartfelt condolences Eke.

Jim Lambert, Calgary, AB

— Jim Lambert

To Ekke and Audrey's family my sincere condolences. I am a former classmate from Hugh Sutherland HS in Carstairs where I knew Audrey. I have absolutely no surprise at the story of people's encounters with Audrey that are shared here. Audrey's family values and their contributuion to our community laid a great foundation for her to add to, as she headed into adult life. I well remember the whole group of girls that made up the hockey teams in Carstairs back in the mid 70's, they were ahead of the times, both Audrey and Helena were there. I always knew she would be amongst those that added well to our society. She fit a great deal into the years she lived so fully! I can share your love of travel as I too had a motorcycle, and shared the back seat with my now wife Debbie from Australia. Ekke, I wish you strength at a time of such a great loss, look to the people in your life now more than ever!

— Murray & Debbie Marsh

Ekke, I am so sorry to read of Audrey's passing. I have enjoyed reading of the adventures you two have enjoyed. Stay strong.

— Tim Creelman

Dear Ekke,
I am deeply saddened to hear about Audrey’s passing. I was just cleaning my mailbox today when I came across your email address although I’d been wondering where your next destinations would be… It was a blessing for me to work with Audrey at Capt. John Palliser. She was welcoming, accommodating and friendly. I really appreciate how she invited me to her group, being new at the school, and how she was always ready to help as well as ready to learn. She made my stay at CJP such a lovely experience, and her sharing of your travel blog was something I really enjoyed thereafter. My thoughts and prayers are with you, Ekke. I will miss her dearly as well as news of your travels together. Lina

— lina jamison

What a beautiful being who lived her live to the fullest, met your husband in Palapye, Botswana, Africa doing what you did best. As a biker he joined us for our UBUNTU ride on the 25th February 2026 and was privileged to be his pillion. May your beautiful soul continue to rest and helmet up BIKER .

— Mamello
