

# STEFANIE "STEFFI" BRUNINGHAUS



Stefanie "Steffi" Bruninghaus was born and raised in Mannheim, Germany, on September 2, 1966. In her early years, she developed a love for animals and became very skilled at dressage. Following her studies at the University of Mannheim, Germany, Steffi moved to Pittsburgh in 1994 to pursue graduate studies in Intelligent Systems (Artificial Intelligence) at the University of Pittsburgh. While at Pitt, she met her

husband-to-be, Vincent Aleven, a graduate student in the same field. They married in 2004. Steffi developed a passion for Middle Eastern dance and music, performing in local venues with Tribe Taksim, a dance troupe she co-founded, as well as solo. She was also very active in Pittsburgh's animal shelter world, spending countless hours to help keep the city's feral cat populations healthy. Steffi was an outspoken advocate for causes she believed in, including the humane treatment of animals, environmental causes, and keeping Frick Park wild. About two and a half years ago, she received the news that she had breast cancer. She fought hard, but her battle with cancer came to an untimely end on December 19, 2023. She is survived by her father, Wolfgang Bruninghaus; her stepmother, Karin Kellenbenz, both of Wald Michelbach, Germany; her brother, Andreas Bruninghaus of Wiehl, Germany; and her husband of 19 years, Vincent Aleven of Pittsburgh. Her energy, her wit, her intelligence, her compassion, and her embrace of life will be deeply missed. The cremation has taken place in quietude. An event to celebrate her life will be held on Saturday, January 6, 2024, at 2 pm at the Schenley Park Visitor Center in Pittsburgh. If planning to attend in person or via livestream, please fill out this RSVP form: <https://forms.gle/kx2G5LzAkXq1r75T7> To celebrate her life privately, you are welcome to support causes she respected: Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy, Upstream Pittsburgh, Humane Animal Rescue, and the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra. Arrangements entrusted to the **JOHN N. ELACHKO FUNERAL HOME**, 3447 Dawson St., Pgh., PA 15213. Please visit Stefanie's memorial page at [ELACHKO.com](http://ELACHKO.com).

Send condolences [post-gazette.com/gb](https://post-gazette.com/gb)