

# English professor shares memoir with hometown audience

📅 December 3, 2019

SHARE THIS STORY

On a Saturday afternoon in November, English Professor Kathleen Pfeiffer stepped to the podium at the public library in her hometown of Trumbull, Connecticut.

Familiar faces greeted her.

There was George and Rita Green, two of her former teachers at St. Joseph High School in Trumbull. There was Katie Helfrich, Lisa Healy and Eileen Scully, childhood friends and classmates. And there was Jim Forster, a friend of her late brother Gerry, whose death some 40 years before had led Pfeiffer, and many of the audience members, to gather at the library that day.

Pfeiffer made the 700-mile trip from Rochester Hills for a public reading of her memoir, "Ink," which reflects on her 11-year-old brother's bout with brain cancer and the spiritual shockwaves that followed in the wake of his death. She read select parts of the book, which referenced several audience members, an experience she described as "emotional, but in a healing way."

"It was surreal, but it also felt like a very healing experience and a closure that was more than just my own," she said. "It was very much a community event because easily half of the people there had gone through this experience with me, so when I was reading, it felt like something we were all going through together."

Pfeiffer's memoir was published in 2018, after being named a winner of the Michigan Writers Cooperative Press Chapbook Competition. In recent years, she has devoted much of her time to studying memoirs and teaching classes on the genre.



*Kathleen Pfeiffer returned to her hometown of Trumbull, Connecticut to give a public reading of her recently published memoir. (Image courtesy of Trumbull Community Television)*



*Professor Pfeiffer is pictured with a copy of her memoir, entitled "Ink." (Image courtesy of Kasey Hilleary)*

As part of her research for the book, Pfeiffer revisited pop culture of the time, reviewed yearbooks, cards and notes, and consulted with friends and family. She also searched archives of newspapers, including the Trumbull Times, [which published an article about her book](#).

“I wrote the book as a way to make meaning out of loss,” Pfeiffer said. “So it was very gratifying to share that meaning with people who are so closely connected to it.”

Pfeiffer’s reading at the Trumbull Library can be viewed [here](#), using the search term “Kathleen.”