



Patricia "Patty" Helfer Waggener

March 12, 1953 - July 30, 2023

Patricia "Patty" (Helfer) Waggener, age 70, of Gainesville, GA, passed away Sunday, July 30, 2023 after a courageous journey fighting Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma.

Patty was born March 12, 1953, in Tillamook, OR, to Don and Ginger Helfer. In 1963, the family moved to Corvallis, OR. Patty graduated from Corvallis High School in 1971. She attended Oregon State University in Corvallis, where she met Chris Waggener. They married in 1973 and moved to San Diego where Patty earned a Bachelor's Degree in Nursing Science at San Diego State University while Chris pursued a military career in the Navy. Eventually, they settled in Snellville, GA, where Patty established an intimate network of friends, many of whom remain close today.

Patty was a nurse for nearly forty years, and devoted her career and life to serving the needs of others. She worked as a registered nurse with Emory University Hospital where she served patients and their families in CCU (Cardiac Care Unit). Patty was known for her excellent humor, intelligence, and compassion which were especially appreciated by her colleagues and close friends. Patty also had a wonderful work family at Gwinnett Medical Center where she worked for many years as the Process Improvement Coordinator for many services including critical care, stroke, and heart failure. She loved her peers at Gwinnett and welcomed their visits during her illness. Patty found great joy in her sons, Steven and Jon, and was proud of their accomplishments and encouraged their optimistic (and sometimes sarcastic)

look at life. Together they shared laughter and love. Steven viewed his mother as a model for compassion, family first, and work ethic, among other things. She played an integral role in his T.B.I. recovery in the early 2000's, and constantly sacrificed time and money to ensure optimal rehabilitation and healing. Jon saw his mother as an exemplar of patience, acceptance, morality, and kindness. Jon treasures the decades he shared with his mother, along with the consistent wisdom and good advice she provided him with throughout their time together.

Patty and Chris divorced and successfully began co-parenting in 1985. The family unit extended to include Ellen Waggener in 1994 upon Ellen's marriage to Chris. Patty's family also included her many beloved dogs: Liquor, Peaches, Shug, Cookie, and Kibbles, who brought her long-lasting joy.

Patty was preceded in death by her father, Donald Helfer; mother, Virginia (Ginger) Helfer, and sisters Gail Helfer and Carol Helfer. Patty is survived by sons, Steven (Jodi) Waggener of Boise, ID, and Jon Waggener of Gainesville, GA; brother, Bob Helfer of Bend, OR; and a multitude of friends whom she loved as family.

A Celebration of Life is scheduled for August 19, 2023, at noon at Sweetwater Clubhouse in Cumming, GA. We will host a lunch in celebration of Patty. The address is 3140 Sweetwater Drive, Cumming, GA 30041. Those who wish to share memories of Patty are welcome. Please bring photos and stories of your time with Patty. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Humane Society of N.E. GA, 845 West Ridge Rd, Gainesville, GA, 30501 in memory of Patty Waggener.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

AUG **19**. 12:00 PM (ET)

Sweetwater Clubhouse
3140 Sweetwater Drive
Cumming, GA 30041

Tribute Wall

GJ

“ *Patty was in the class behind me T Corvallis high. I met her when she was taking Human Biology class from Chris Christianson her junior year. I was a teacher assistant, having taken the class the year before. loved anatomy and physiology, and Coach Chris was an excellent teacher.*

I remember Patty as an excellent student and asked. Her if she would like to go to the. Christmas Dance. She said yes we had a great time . I had tried to get a date with her after that, but she was always busy.

Great memories and not surprised.by her successful career as a nurse.

GLENN JACOB. CHS CLASS OF 1970

Glenn Jacob - February 02, 2024 at 08:31 PM