

PATRICIA STEELE



Patricia Steele, called "Pat" by most people, "Mrs. Steele" by many children, and "hon," "mom," "Ammie," and "Aunt Pat" by those who loved her the most, passed away on November 25, 2023. After a long and valiant struggle with Parkinson's Disease, she died the way she wanted: peacefully at home, in her sunny and cozy living room with her family and her dog.

Patricia was preceded in death by sisters, Mary Lou (Nichols) Zeuner and Eva Ann (Nichols) Gabella; and brothers, John (Jack) and William (Bill) Nichols. She is survived by her loving husband of over 60 years, Donald Steele; her five children, Donalee, David, Douglas, Sharon, and Mandy Steele; sons-in-law, Howard Stewart, Steven Schlick, and Terrence O'Hara; and nine grandchildren, Cara Zlatos, Anna Reese, Jack Reese, Mary Steele, John Steele, and Jack, Katherine, William, and Flora O'Hara.

Child of George Nichols and Eva Nichols (nee McGuirl), Patricia Lee Nichols was born in Mars, PA on August 30, 1942. At the age of 7, her mother passed away and she moved to Shadyside where she was raised by her great-aunt, Anna Bamberger. While her childhood was not traditionally idyllic, she took thorough advantage of living within walking distance of the Carnegie Museums and Library, with beautiful nearby parks and neighborhoods to explore.

She married Donald at the age of 20 and raised five children. For decades, the Steele family home in O'Hara was bustling with children and animals, action-packed with school projects, swim lessons, walks outside in all seasons, crafting, cooking, and games, and filled with the sounds of musical instruments being practiced. In addition to raising her own children, she provided daycare in the home for many years. Her ability to truly understand, nurture, and encourage children was unparalleled. She instilled a deep love of learning and nature, and an openness to imagination and creativity in all children whose lives she touched. A nice day at the Steele household might mean it was time for "jungle lunches," where brown bag-packed lunches were hidden in the big backyard. This was highly exciting for the kids, who would then happily sit down together outside to enjoy their found treasure lunches.

After a bout with cancer, Patricia decided at age 49 to enroll in nursing school, a brave decision at this point in her life. As was the case for many women of her era, she never had the opportunity to attend college despite her exceptional abilities and intellectual curiosity. Never one to dwell on the past or look for excuses, she was a diligent student and excelled in her training. Upon graduating and receiving her RN license, she embarked on a long and rewarding career as an orthopedic nurse at UPMC St. Margaret's Hospital. Years after retirement, she returned to "St. Peg's" (her moniker) as a patient. It was clear that she was still well respected for her skills as a health care professional, and fondly remembered for her humor and spark, and for her trademark curly red hair.

And now: On the subject of dogs. A description of Patricia's life would be incomplete without remarking upon her love of all animals, especially dogs. Throughout her lifetime, she had numerous dogs ranging in size from extra-small (mini-dachshunds) to XXL. That all dogs, especially her many "grand-dogs," instinctively trusted her and bonded with her is irrefutable evidence that dogs are excellent judges of character.

A Memorial Mass will be held at St. Edward's Church, 450 Walnut Street, Blawnox, PA 15238, at 10:30 a.m. on Friday, Dec. 1, 2023. Following Mass, family and friends are invited to a Celebration of Life at Old Thunder Brewing Co., 340 Freeport Rd., from noon to 2 p.m. In lieu of flowers, donations in Patricia's honor may be made to Humane Animal Rescue of Pittsburgh at <https://givebutter.com/HARPDiy/patricia-steele-memorial-fundraiser-for-harp> and the Parkinson's Foundation of Pittsburgh at http://www3.parkinson.org/goto/Pat_Steele.

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