

MARILYN AXELSON HAYES



Marilyn Axelson Hayes died from cancer November 20, 2023, after a short period of home hospice. She was born November 13, 1938, in Boardman Ohio, the daughter of Oscar A. Axelson, M.D. and Amy Glassford Axelson, both deceased.

Marilyn graduated from Youngstown State University with a chemistry-biology major and also obtained Master of Social Work and Master Public Health degrees from the University of Pittsburgh. She worked as a clinical social worker at Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic and as the Director of casework for the Pittsburgh Blind Association. She was also a mental health therapist at Wesley Institute-Highland School, a special education school for middle and high school students, in an intensive out-patient program as an individual, group and family therapist. She was certified in relaxation and hypnotherapy as well as in mindfulness therapy and teaching. And she was an individual and family therapist at Inter-Care Psychiatric Services. In 1970, she was married to John B. Hayes, now a retired attorney, and they moved from Shadyside to Upper St. Clair in 1977. They have two children, Pamela Jeanne Hayes, a software developer, of Ann Arbor, Michigan, and Brendan Alan Hayes of Oakhurst, California, an expedition guide at Yosemite National Park. Marilyn is also survived by her brother, Alan A. Axelson, M.D. and his wife, Elaine Axelson of Upper St Clair.

Marilyn was a very special person. She always greeted people with a smile, even if she didn't feel good. She was an exceptionally gifted therapist for those suffering from mental health and addiction issues. Her petite stature belied her strength—she was an enduring force for good, always there, always doing the job that needed to be done. She was caring about her clients, and compassionate, but with clarity, pragmatism, discipline and solid boundaries. She was self-determined and quietly assertive; strong-minded and purposeful. She soldiered on through various calamities that would have sent others into self-pity or retirement. She prevailed. She also loved travel, and she and John shared great trips around the world where, with her eye for beauty, style and quality, they purchased artifacts, took photographs and made albums of them that fill shelves in their home office along with their many books. Their house on Morrow Road is like a photo and art gallery. Marilyn was also a generous and active volunteer in mission causes, like the rummage sales she managed at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Upper St. Clair, to raise money for local charities. She also loved dogs, like Wallaby and Wheel, their wire haired dachshunds. Some of John's poetry is about his life with Marilyn, his long-time friend and the love of his life.

Marilyn will be missed not only by John, their two children and an extended family, but also by many friends and professional associates who have known Marilyn; PEO members, and the patients and families she has helped and guided both personally and by remote access during the Covid season.

The Hayes/Axelson family plans to have a private celebration of Marilyn's life between Thanksgiving and Christmas. Contributions in Marilyn's honor can be made to organizations that promote mental health care and cancer research. Please add or view tributes at www.beinhauer.com.

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