

CATHERINE PARSONS

November 28, 1944 - January 16, 2024



Catherine (Cathy) Eileen Matjasko Parsons, age 79, passed away on January 16, 2024, in Oak Park Heights, Minnesota, holding hands with Jerry, her husband of 57 years.

Cathy was the third child of Louis and Ruth Matjasko, and graduated from St. Joseph's High School in Natrona Heights, Pennsylvania, in 1962. She attended Mercyhurst College in Erie, Pennsylvania, and graduated in 1965 with a B.A. in Education. She began her teaching career in Dubois, Pennsylvania, shortly after graduating, and Cathy and Jerry were married in 1966.

Shortly after moving to Lincoln, Nebraska, in 1967, Cathy began a second career as a houseparent and group home manager for developmentally disabled children with the Lancaster County Office of Mental Retardation (LOMR). From there, she took a position with the State Office of Mental Retardation, and, after receiving a master's in human development, she began accrediting facilities across the United States that serve people with developmental disabilities, ultimately becoming the Director of Accreditation Services at what is currently the Council on Quality and Leadership. Cathy was the driving force behind the development of Personal Outcome Measures and their use as an innovative way to measure the quality of life of people with developmental disabilities as well as the services provided to those people. Those efforts led to the publication of numerous manuals describing Personal Outcome Measures for all age groups, and the Personal Outcome Measures she developed and authored are still in use today across the U.S. and internationally.

In addition to her parents, Cathy was preceded in death by her sisters, Jane Matjasko, M.D., and Susanna Shawler, and her nephew, Kurt Shawler Jr. In addition to her husband, Cathy is survived by her two daughters, Angela (Jerry Roedel) and Maura, as well as grandchildren Vincent (Kenzie) and Annaleigh. She is survived by three siblings: Lou (Karen) Matjasko of Rockton, Illinois, John (Caroline) Matjasko of Charlotte, North Carolina, and Lenora (Ken) Vesio of Natrona Heights, Pennsylvania, and many nieces and nephews.

A memorial will be held on April 19th at 10:30 am at Boutwell's Landing Senior Living, 5600 Norwich Pkwy, Oak Park Heights, MN. In lieu of flowers, Cathy's family requests that donations be made to the Special Olympics (specialolympics.com) or a charity of your choice.

Cathy was a wonderful wife, mother, and grandmother. She will be remembered for her wonderful wit and intelligence, her great humor and memorable laugh and smile. She will be dearly missed and always remembered.

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