

ELIZABETH SAGAN QUINLIN



Elizabeth Sagan Quinlin stopped for every lemonade stand she ever passed. She always lit candles in church. She favored opera and show tunes, Joni Mitchell and Diana Ross. She loved all holidays and holiday decorations. She adored high-strung dogs, children's sporting events, gardening, black turtlenecks and salted peanuts. Liz was the last remaining die-hard Pirates fan. She read the Wall Street Journal cover to cover

every day. She first met the woman who would become her best friend in the dressing room at Saks and went home only to discover that they were next-door neighbors.

Liz loved Cape Cod, her favorite place on earth. She was happiest there in a house with no air conditioning but an open window and a breeze, drinking a watered-down gin and tonic alongside her sister, Rosemary. She bought cookies from every Girl Scout, gave money to anyone in need, liked her meat very well-done and proudly gave out full-sized candy bars every Halloween. Liz was a talented violinist, had a wicked tennis serve and believed in the power of a three-part apology. Her ringtone was the Olympic theme song, set to the loudest volume possible. She hated spicy food, was an absolutely awful backseat driver and despised unkindness in every form. She was terrible at charades and directions but that's really it.

Born in Boston and raised in Mt. Lebanon, Liz graduated from the Ellis School, a place she loved and where she met life-long, cherished friends. She was the captain of the tennis team at Cornell University and attended medical school at the University of Pittsburgh. Liz Sagan was a world-class surgeon, the only woman in her residency class and the first female urologist in Pittsburgh in 1984. She was twice voted the best teacher for a specialty, in which she didn't even specialize.

She was incomparable and despite repeated phone interruptions by her children during surgical procedures, she remained at the top of her game until her retirement in 2020. Liz would do anything for her patients and passionately resisted the constraints of a bureaucratic healthcare system.

Most importantly, Liz was a mother to four children. They were the joy of her life and she loved them with every fiber of her being. She had lots of thoughts on their fashion choices and decorating decisions but made sure they always knew that she was their most fervent ally. Perhaps the only thing she loved more than her children were her 14 grandchildren, for whom she was a sports enthusiast, ballet teacher, summer camp candy smuggler, lunch and shopping partner and always a part-time pediatrician.

Liz passed away on January 31, the day before her birthday, surrounded by her family and loving friends. She was preceded in death by her beloved parents, Margaret and Emil Sagan. She is survived by her siblings, Rosemary Lundberg (Matt), Margaret Williams, William Sagan (Pamela) and Emily Culley (Paul); her children, Molly O'Brien (Kevin), Kate Brown (Steve), Ann Davis (Jonathan) and Max Quinlin (Claire); as well as her former husband and insignificant other, Robert Quinlin. Her grandchildren, who were the loves of her life, Jack, Sloane, Laine, Quin, Jules and Shea O'Brien, Samantha and Lee Brown, Malcolm and Cooke Davis and Hugh, Rose, Harry and Felix Quinlin, will grow up knowing that she lived every day, despite all odds, just for them.

We are furious to lose her. But we are thankful for her love and legacy every day.

To learn more about her incredible impact on urology and women's healthcare, visit <https://shorturl.at/SoAcQ>.

Friends will be received at JOHN A. FREYVOGEL SONS, INC., (freyvogelfuneralhome.com) 4900 Centre Avenue, at Devonshire Street, on Tuesday, February 11, from 1-3 p.m. and 5-7p.m.

Funeral, Wednesday, Mass of Christian Burial, St. Paul Cathedral, 108 N. Dithridge Street, at 10 a.m.

In lieu of flowers, please hand out full-sized candy bars on Halloween.

Donations in her honor can be made to the Elizabeth Sagan Women's Health Research Foundation. To donate, please visit: mageewomens.org/saganmemorial

Send condolences post-gazette.com/gb