



Phyllis A. Gerber

October 24, 1953 - June 15, 2020

Phyllis Ann Ebner Gerber passed peacefully on June 15 following a 5-year illness. She was surrounded by flowers, her family, a rose scented candle and Beatles music. Phyl, as she was known to everyone, spent her early years in West Haven, CT and at a young age moved to Great Neck, NY where she attended Saddle Rock Elementary School and Great Neck North Junior and Senior High Schools. As a 10th grader, she met John Gerber who was a senior, and began a 50+ year relationship. Phyl attended the University of Hartford for two years before marrying John in 1973. They lived in Ithaca, NY for 5 years where Phyl learned to become a potter, often selling her wares at local craft fairs. They moved to St. Croix in the U.S. Virgin Islands in 1978 where Jacob was born and then to Urbana, IL in 1979. Phyl loved her life as a fulltime mom in Urbana, where Brian and Jeremy were born and her boys spent their early years. The family moved to Amherst, MA in 1992, where Phyl worked as a potter and a teaching assistant for special needs children at the Wildwood Elementary School until she retired in 2013.

Phyl loved to ride her bicycle long distances, read at the beach, jog with her friends, hike mountains with John, and most of all she loved to get down on the floor to play with her grandchildren. She lived for her family but also had many friends who loved her dearly from all stages of her life. Phyl especially appreciated the support of friends who took her on many outings during her illness and joined her on her deck to talk, laugh and cry toward the end.

One of her friends wrote; "Phyl has fought a strong and courageous battle against each and every debilitating stage of ALS for nearly 5 years. Last year she was the keynote speaker for the annual ALS Walkathon in Northampton, MA. Phyl was never defined by the limitations of her challenges. She lived each day to the full extent of her best ability. Phyl loved her family and friends; and has taught us many life lessons through her daily acts of courage and resilience."

Phyl will be missed terribly by her husband of 48 years, John Gerber, and their three sons and spouses, Jacob and Shannon, Brian and Belita, and Jeremy and Sam. She is survived by her father, Milton Ebner and his spouse Florrie, brothers and wives, Stuart and Gretel, and Howard and Francine, her mother-in-law Peggy Gerber, and brothers-in-law and their spouses Dan and Jen, and Don and Roselle, and all of their children, and finally by her beloved grandchildren, Noah, Colin, Elena and Lucia.

Phyl's family is planning a celebration of life sometime in the fall, associated with the ALS Walk-a-Thon in Look Park on Sunday, September 13. They are requesting donations in lieu of flowers to the ALS Association Massachusetts Chapter. Here is the link if you would like to donate: http://web.alsa.org/goto/For_Phyl New England Funeral & Cremation Center, LLC, 25 Mill Street, Springfield, MA has been entrusted with the arrangements. Visit www.nefcc.net

Tribute Wall

SS

“ I have such great memories when I was a child when Phyl and John visited every Christmas to our house on Franklin Place in Great Neck. Oh how I enjoyed playing the “big sister” to Jake and Brian while I was always the little sister! The beautiful pottery Phyl made is something I will never forget and that was always a presense in our home growing up. She was truly a wonderful person and I am so sorry to hear of her passing. My thoughts and prayers are with all of you

Suzanne Sabourin - February 14, 2023 at 10:04 AM

RM

“ Phyl was a special person with a kind heart and calming spirit. We have great memories of our times together with John and Phyl and rejoice in their life together, while we grieve the loss John and the family are now experiencing. You are in our prayers. Rich & Joy

Rich & Joy McLeod - February 14, 2023 at 10:04 AM

LE

“ I am so very sorry for your loss. What an honor it was to work with Phyl at Wildwood School. I will always remember what a bright light she shone there, and her beautiful energy. Thinking of you all...

Liz Elder - February 14, 2023 at 10:04 AM

WL

“ Dear Jeremy, Sam and Family. \r\n\r\nWe are so sorry for your loss and inspired to read about Phyl. She clearly led a well lived life! May she be an inspiration to connect with all that is truly important.\r\n\r\nWith love,\r\n\r\nWendy and Ken

Wendy Chabot & Ken Lieberman - February 14, 2023 at 10:04 AM

KR

“ *Phyll was an amazing woman, teacher, friend. I loved working with her for many years at Wildwood. I loved running into her at races (where she usually smoked me). I loved seeing her with her grandchildren, and with John, and with her toes in the sand.*

Kathryn RUNYAN - February 14, 2023 at 10:04 AM