



Patricia J. Whalen

May 21, 1941 - December 17, 2023

It is with heavy hearts that we announce the passing of Patricia (Pat) Jeanne Whalen, 82, who peacefully departed after her valiant battle with Alzheimer's disease, surrounded by her beloved family on December 17, 2023.

Pat was born on May 21, 1941, in Elyria, Ohio, the second of six children born to Henry Carlton Bodmann and Dorothy Mae Vietzen. She graduated from Elyria High School in 1959, embarking on a career as an executive secretary, following her passion despite suggestions to pursue teaching. Her dedication led her to roles at General Industries and later at Ford Motor Company in Lorain, Ohio, where she worked for 12 years. It was at Ford that she met the love of her life, Henry (Hank) Chesley Whalen, a U.S. Air Force veteran. Their marriage on September 4, 1976, marked the beginning of a loving partnership. After settling in Canton, Michigan, Pat devoted her life to raising her two daughters with utmost pride.

Pat faced adversity with incredible courage, supporting Hank through his battle with terminal lung cancer until his passing on September 25, 1989. She continued her unwavering dedication by nurturing and supporting her children's professional pursuits, tragically enduring the loss of her beloved daughter, Meredith Lynn Whalen a 2000 Honors graduate of U of Michigan Ross School of Business, during the 9/11 tragedy. Her surviving daughter, Kristen Elizabeth Whalen, stands as a testament to Pat's guidance, excelling as an Associate Professor of Biology at Haverford College, helping young scholars pursue their dreams. When asked about the losses she has endured

Pat replied, "I have truly enjoyed a 'blessed' life despite the losses along the way of my husband and daughter. It has truly made me a stronger person, and I thank God that they were a part of my life."

Pat cherished her extended family, including stepdaughters Deborah Whalen, Katherine (Whalen) Purcell, and stepson Stephen Whalen. She lovingly referred to herself as a 'grandmother by default' to Katie Whalen and Ellie Jackson, finding joy in teaching them to swim and creating cherished memories by the pool.

Pat adored traveling with friends and family, especially cruising to different ports around the globe, enjoying in her own words, a 'foot loose and fancy free' life. Her fondest memories were taking her daughters to Hawaii and on cruises to the Caribbean, instilling a passion and love of marine science in Kristen, who would later obtain her Ph.D. in Biological Oceanography at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution on Cape Cod, MA. She often told friends, "It makes me happy to know Kristen is following her passion and loving every minute of it." Pat made a second home on Cape Cod to be close to Kristen and spent many summers and falls tending to her gardens of annual and perennials. Pat loved being on the Cape and was blessed with a green thumb. Often you could find Pat from sunup to sundown in the very large rock garden behind her Cape home where she 'puttering about' and called it her 'therapy' to have her fingers in the dirt, watching the fruits of her labor bloom and grow.

Pat's love of her family and friends had no bounds. She would find pleasure in taking trips with girlfriends or playing a rousing round of crazy eights and Canasta at Christmastime with family. But her greatest joy was raising her two daughters. Every time she saw her girls she would exclaim, "Have I told you today I love you!". Pat will be cherished in memory as a woman whose greatest pride and joy were found in her role as a devoted wife to Hank and, above all, as a loving mother. Her unwavering dedication to her family was the cornerstone of her life. She found immense fulfillment in nurturing and guiding her daughters, often expressing her boundless love for them. Her legacy as a

loving, caring mother and devoted wife will forever resonate in the hearts of those she leaves behind.

Visitation Saturday, December 23rd at 9:00 AM until the 10 AM Funeral Service at Plymouth First United Methodist Church, 45201 North Territorial Road, Plymouth, Michigan.

Entombment Glen Eden Memorial Park in Livonia, Michigan.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to the Meredith L. Whalen Memorial Fund at the Ross Business School at the University of Michigan (<https://giving.umich.edu/basket/fund/570447>) and the Meredith Whalen Memorial Fund at the Canton Community Foundation (https://cantonfoundation.formstack.com/forms/local_impact_alliance_donation).

Arrangement made by the Vermeulen-Sajewski Funeral Home, Plymouth, Michigan.

To share a memory, please use the share a memory tab on this webpage.

Cemetery Details

Glen Eden Memorial Park

35667 Eight Mile Road
Livonia, MI 48152

Previous Events

Visitation

DEC **23**. 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM (ET)

Plymouth First United Methodist Church
45201 North Territorial Road
Plymouth , MI 48170

Funeral Service

DEC **23**. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Plymouth First United Methodist Church
45201 North Territorial Road
Plymouth , MI 48170

Entombment

DEC **23**. 12:45 PM - 1:30 PM (ET)

Glen Eden Memorial Park
35667 Eight Mile Road
Livonia, MI 48152

Tribute Wall



“ *Sweet Tenderness was purchased for the family of Patricia J. Whalen.*



December 22, 2023 at 07:40 PM



“ *5 files added to the tribute wall*



Kristen Whalen - December 22, 2023 at 05:04 AM



Bob emailed me of Pats passing. I can still hear your infectious laugh. Rest In Peace. ❤️

Judy Bowen Stilley - December 28, 2023 at 09:00 PM



“ *Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet was purchased for the family of Patricia J. Whalen.* ”



December 21, 2023 at 10:14 AM