



Carol Suzanne Hollenshead

October 28, 1949 - November 17, 2018

She was a righteous feminist just as the movement took hold. Told by the county clerk that she would need to get a court order to keep her maiden name, she instead consulted with an attorney who said “do nothing; there is nothing in the law requiring a name change.” And so she did nothing. That attorney was Jean King. Fittingly, in May of this year the Women’s Center of Southeast Michigan awarded Carol the inaugural Jean King award for activism on behalf of women.

She created another important trend in name equality by naming her son Anthony Wilson and then her daughter Evelyn Hollenshead. This trend that has yet to catch on, even within her own family. But give it time.

Carol spent her entire career at the University of Michigan, serving at the Institute of Gerontology, the Nursing School, and the Office of Vice President for Research. Her passion for advocating for women, representing women, counseling women, and cheerleading for women took her to a seemingly predestined mission when she was named Director of the Center for the Education of Women. Over her 20 years at CEW she touched the lives of countless women at the University through counseling, scholarships, advocacy and research. She was a steady hand guiding CEW from its original role into a more pivotal place in the University Community.

Confronted by an old boys’ network at the University, she suggested to a friend that they needed an old girls’ network. She hosted a brunch with a group of senior University administrators. That brunch became a monthly networking event that endures even now some 35 years later.

Carol was a nurturing mother to her two children, providing them with an embrace of love and emotional security. Her balancing of devoted motherhood with a power career was an inspiration and a model to the women who followed her. Her own experiences and her sense of simple justice lead her to press the University for enlightened leave and tenure policies in support of working mothers.

Carol was an avid traveler with trips all over the world. She climbed to the Tigers Nest in Bhutan, watched orangutans in Borneo, followed the wild dogs in Botswana, ate fried scorpions in China, petted whales in Baja California, snorkeled with sea lions in the Galapagos, and wandered through markets all over the world. She was a connoisseur of

wine, food, art, theater, dance, and gymnastics. She was particularly fond of art by and about women from all over the world.

Carol had a special love of Italy, spending more than a year there during 20 trips between 1991 and 2017. She was better versed on Italian history and culture than most Italians. She explored the small corners of the country, taking in the art, street life, and of course food. She attended festivals that featured racing on stilts, racing up a mountain carrying statues of saints, and symbolically mating male and female trees. Repeatedly small-town Italians were startled to learn that she had no Italian relatives, just a love of the country. She was delighted by her family and she delighted them; especially when they all gathered at her Lake Huron retreat in Alpena. Her laughter filled the house, warming the hearts, and lifting the spirits of everyone. She took great pride in the accomplishments and lives of her children and daughters-in-law, feminists all.

Carol coped with her cancer with exceptional grace and tranquility. Even with increasing physical limitations, she grabbed onto every opportunity and lived life to the fullest. In her final days, she was blessed by the early arrival of her fourth grandchild Fin (Franklin) just in time for her birthday. We are sad that she left us too soon. But we are grateful for how she lived and for the way she enriched our lives.

She was missed at the family Thanksgiving extravaganza and will always be missed by her husband Bruce Wilson, her children Evelyn Hollenshead (Alicia George) and Anthony Wilson (Heidi Rosbe), her grandchildren Abraham Hollenshead, Franklin Hollenshead, Omar Wilson and Lola Wilson, her brothers Neill Hollenshead (Carol K Hollenshead) and Robert Hollenshead (Lily Gee), her niece Lori Walters (David Walters), her nephews Benjamin Hollenshead (Karen Staib) and Samuel Hollenshead (Brooke Slezak), her great niece Claire Walters, and her great nephews Louis Walters, and Elias, Ethan, Marcus and Lucas Hollenshead.

Contributions in her honor may be made to the Center for the Education of Women (cew.umich.edu) or Alternatives for Girls (alternativesforgirls.org).

Comments



“ Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Carol Suzanne Hollenshead.



January 11 at 02:32 PM