

Nancy Nash Johnson



Nancy Nash Johnson

Nashville, TN

Nancy Nash Johnson passed away peacefully at her home on Saturday March 29, 2014 after a two year battle with [breast cancer](#).

She was born to the late Duane and Barbara Nash on May 19, 1938 in Brooklyn, NY. Nancy graduated from Wilmington Friends School in 1956 and received a BA from Mt. Holyoke College in 1960, majoring in Physiology. She also received a Masters of Education from [Harvard University](#) in 1963. She married H. Keith Johnson, MD in 1960, and they were happily married for more than 53 years.

As a teenager, Nancy climbed extensively with her father in the Adirondack Mountains and was the 107th person to climb all 46 Adirondack peaks higher than 4,000 feet.

Nancy was a teacher at heart. She first taught science at The Lenox School and The Professional Children's School in New York City in 1963. Last year, fifty years later, she was still teaching at Franklin Road Academy as a science consultant. When Nancy arrived in Nashville in 1969, she started teaching at Oak Hill School and followed Bill Bradshaw to Franklin Road Academy when it was started in 1973. She continued to teach at Franklin Road Academy for the next 40 years.

In 1975, Nancy helped to found Camp Okawehna, a week-long camp for children with kidney disease. She has attended every camp since then, even while enduring chemo treatments over the last two years. For both campers and counselors who have been at Camp Okawehna, it is difficult to think about having camp without "Camper Nancy" being there. Nancy also spent a great amount of time at Radnor Lake. To her, Radnor Lake was her "piece of the Adirondacks" in Nashville.

Nancy touched so many people. She made each of us feel special and valued. When we spoke with her, she was completely engaged in our conversation. When we would see her later, she would remember minute details about our conversation and would ask for an update on what we talked about previously.

Nancy is survived by her husband, Keith; her children, Susan Preston, with her husband Jamie Preston;

Doug Johnson with his wife Kathy Blackstock; and Ken Johnson with his wife Peggy Johnson. She is also survived by her five grandchildren, Sonja Preston, Chloe Johnson, Gabriel Johnson, Annika Johnson and Tyler Johnson.

In lieu of flowers, the family is requesting that donations be made in Nancy Johnson's name to either the Adirondack Foundation, at P.O. Box 288, Lake Placid, New York 12946; or to The Friends of Radnor Lake, P.O. Box 40324, Nashville, TN 37204.

A gathering will take place to celebrate Nancy's life at Main Event Productions, 1418 Church St., from 4 - 7 p.m. on Friday, April 25th, and a Memorial Service will be held at Second Presbyterian Church at 10 a.m. on Saturday, April 26th, with a reception to follow at the church.

Nancy's father wrote a journal about their climbs in the Adirondacks, and Nancy had this journal published a few years ago. After her death, we read his account of the end of their last climb up Mount Marcy. This is how we see her now: "So out on the trail Nancy was getting swifter by the mile. Finally by a rock one mile from the Garden, we shifted the pack for the last time, and freed from its burden, she disappeared down the trail, swinging along at a free riding pace I could no longer keep up with. I leaned against the rock, rested and relaxed with only a mile to go - yet I had the strangest feeling that she was walking off and leaving me for other worlds; and I was suddenly lonely - yet at peace here amongst the familiar trees and path."

Nashville Funeral and Cremation Service, (615) 256-1605.

- See more at:

<http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/tennessean/obituary.aspx?pid=170657977#sthash.rxf1cyd5.dpuf>