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Nancy Girard, 60

Jul 26, 2018



Nancy Louise Girard

GILMANTON — Nancy Louise Girard, 60, passed away gently on July 14, 2018, after a long battle against the ravages of Lou Gehrig's disease (ALS), surrounded by the comfort and prayers of family and friends who stood in for the large cast of loving people who supported her during the struggle.

Born in Turners Falls, Massachusetts, she was the youngest daughter of Joseph Alcide Girard and Elaine George Girard. She is survived by her college sweetheart and husband of 37 wonderful years, Garret Graaskamp, and children, Kelsey and Cameron Graaskamp; brother, Richard and Janet Girard and their children, Timothy, Jonathan and daughter-in-law Katherine; sister, Susanne and Charlie Morgan and their children Amanda and Alexandra; sister, Noreen and Edward Lemieux and son Seth; sisters-in-law, Dorothy Graaskamp, Martha Testerman, her husband, Patrick, and their children, Holly, Hana and David; and sister-in-law, Kim Graaskamp. Nancy was pre-deceased by brother-in-law James McGregor Graaskamp.

Nancy grew up along the rural banks of the Connecticut River within a family heritage of self-sufficiency and concern for the well-being of the environment and the human condition. Her upbringing instilled a determination and purpose for a life's work conserving and protecting the natural environment for the benefit of generations yet to come. She volunteered her time to the Town of Gilmanton for 23 years as a member of the Planning Board, 13 years as the Chair. She did pro bono work in the New

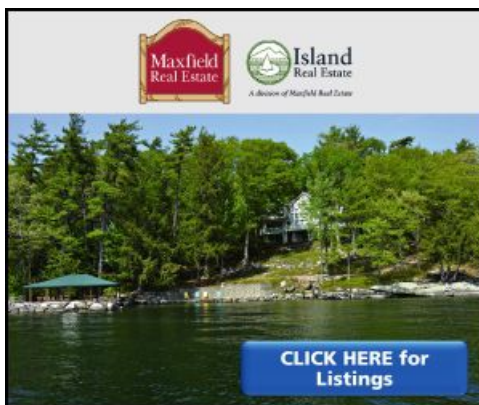
Hampshire Bar Association Domestic Violence Emergency (DOVE) program for over 25 years to provide victims of domestic violence with emergency legal services. By example, she passed this legacy of service on to her children who are serving in the fields of medical and mental health.



Nancy was a lady of firsts. As an eighth grader in Gill, Massachusetts, she inspired and organized a town-wide trash pick-up and recycling effort to mark the first anniversary of Earth Day. She was among the women in the first full four-year class at Amherst College after it went coeducational in 1974, where she co-founded the Sabrinas, Amherst's women's a capella singing group, and graduated with honors. She later earned a juris doctor degree and a master of arts degree in international studies from the University of Denver. She was a member of the New Hampshire and New York State Bar Associations.

Nancy was the first legal coordinator for the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department and helped start the popular Becoming an Outdoors Woman program. She founded the New Hampshire office of the Conservation Law Foundation, and was its Director for almost a decade. While at CLF, she spearheaded many collaborative efforts among communities and volunteers to facilitate statewide smart growth initiatives for high-speed rail corridors, protection of the Great Bay Estuary from the impacts of regional wastewater discharge, protection of New Hampshire's forests from power plant acid rain impacts, energy conservation and renewable energy alternatives and climate change mitigation, wetland habitat conservation, and protection of the Green and White Mountains roadless areas. For three years she was a member of the National Advisory Council for Environmental Policy Technology Subcommittee on Promoting Environmental Stewardship and was the Chair of the Working Group on Innovation in Core EPA Programs.

Nancy worked for the City of Boston in Mayor Menino's administration as the Commissioner of the Environment Department. In this role, she planned and implemented protections for the City's built and natural environments and developed policies and programs on environmental issues including climate action, historic sites, buildings, landscapes, and waterways. One outcome on her watch was the development of the 2014 Climate Action Plan Update, which established a proactive neighborhood engagement program and city-university partnership that reflected her belief in collaboration as the foundation for permanent positive change. Nancy was on the Board of Directors for the Concord Food Co-op for ten years, serving as President for seven years. During this time the Co-op tripled in size on South Main Street, bought out the Kearsarge Cooperative Grocer in New London, and grew to over 5,000 members.



Nancy’s most important passion was for her family. She taught Kelsey and Cameron through the example of her life to demonstrate respect for one’s self but also for the opinions of others in order to create trust and a mutual incentive to achieve compassionate compromises and resilient outcomes that benefit the greater good of the community.

She loved to sing and was part of the summer New Hampshire Music Festival Chorus for many years. Cameron inherited this passion and Nancy went to all his plays and concerts at Gilford High School and the University of New Hampshire. Nancy loved cheering for Kelsey as she played soccer, basketball and softball in high school and college. Just last week she enjoyed a final indoor soccer game in Bow, noisily sounding her wheel chair buzzer after every goal. On summer evenings you could find her in the garden tending the vegetables and harvesting raspberries for a family ice cream sundae party; maple walnut was her favorite. She was a walking encyclopedia on flowers and plants, learned as a Girl Scout from her Mom, which made every hike a game to add a new flower to the list. Her favorite hike was across Mount Mansfield in Vermont.

A Celebration of Life Service will be held Saturday, Aug. 18, at 11 a.m. followed by a reception at the Faith Community Bible Church in Loudon. In lieu of flowers, please consider making a donation to the ALS Association Northern New England Chapter, 10 Ferry St, Suite 438, Concord NH 03301.

