



We're thankful for: our mother's love and compassionate hospice care

Our mother, Mignonne (Mickie), raised us in a small northern town called Kirkland Lake. Although money was a bit tight, we never felt poor. Our mom gave us the kind of richness that only love can provide. She was hard-working, dedicated to her family, and a complete “mama bear”. We always felt protected under mom’s watch.

Though she was only 5’2” and all of 110lbs, mom was a formidable presence. **Small but mighty, our mother was a pillar of strength for our family over the years.** As we grew up and began our respective careers in IT consulting (Steve) and nursing/medical sales (Tracy), she remained intensely devoted to us – and eventually, to her seven grandchildren.

Mom had the most incredible creative spirit. She sketched beautiful portraits of family members, she hand-sewed Halloween costumes and clothing for our kids (including matching outfits for their dolls) and she loved all kinds of music. We’d spend hours together listening to the oldies on Sunday morning, though mom was just as content to listen to Lady Gaga as Glen Campbell. She was a lifelong learner, and particularly proud of her ability to pick up on the newest technologies. Mom’s grandkids even affectionately called her Gadget Granny! Her laugh was loud and contagious.

You can imagine how devastated we were when our formidable mom’s health began to decline after a series of complications including a cancer diagnosis. In February 2018, mom was told she had just 3 to 6 months to live. But as we mentioned before, our mother was mighty! She defied those odds, and lived independently for some time before moving in with Tracy’s family in March 2020. It wasn’t until mom experienced a gastrointestinal bleed a couple years later that we knew it was time to tour Margaret Bahen Hospice.

Though the idea of losing our mom was unimaginable, we were heartened by the hospice’s inviting facility and attentive staff. Mom moved into Margaret Bahen for several weeks before her health took a turn for the better, and she came back home. We were able to spend that Easter together at our family cottage in Kirkland Lake, enjoying the comfort of the town where she raised us. Unfortunately, mom’s health began to deteriorate that June. We reached out to Margaret Bahen Hospice, and were relieved when they told us there was room for her to return.

Mom’s new room overlooked the garden, and the staff we’d known from her first stay were the same ones who greeted us upon her return. As we navigated the exhaustion and grief of knowing our mom was close to her final days, we were given the warmest possible care. **Margaret Bahen Hospice is a truly special place – and we can’t imagine how our remaining time with mom would have looked without their gentle and compassionate support.** We’re grateful that when she died on June 22, 2021, mom was surrounded by many of the hospice staff in addition to our family. The tremendous affection in the room was palpable.

While we miss our mom immensely, and the grief is still so fresh, we are thankful to have had the quality time we did with her at Margaret Bahen Hospice. Mom’s vibrant spirit lives on both in the physical reminders – her drawings decorate many of our family members’ homes – and also within our hearts. **Our gratitude for Margaret Bahen Hospice is immeasurable, and we hope you will consider a gift in support of this special place for families.**


Tracy Waldron


Steve Bennetts