



## Patricia Stepanchak

February 13, 2024

Patricia G. Stepanchak, 99, died peacefully in her sleep at home on February 13, 2024, surrounded by family. She was the daughter of the late Ralph and Elizabeth R. George of Glenshaw, PA, and the sister of the late Ralph M. George, Jr.

Born on April 26, 1924, in Pittsburgh, PA, Patricia was a 1942 graduate of Shaler Township High School. She attended Dennison University, then transferred to the University of Pittsburgh, where she received her nursing degree (RN) in 1947. She specialized in polio care for the next decade, which included supplying specimens to Dr. Jonas Salk during the development of the polio vaccine. She also traveled with the American Red Cross to “hot spots” around the country to provide care for polio patients.

Patricia married the late Russell Stepanchak in 1956 and moved to Columbia, PA on New Year’s Day, 1957, eventually residing on Chestnut Street. All four of her boys were born at Columbia Hospital, where Russell was president. She later moved to the family’s 100-acre farm in Rapho Township.

She returned to nursing in 1974 and worked at Fairview Manor (Columbia), Heatherbank (Columbia), PA State Hospital for Crippled Children (Elizabethtown), and as a nurse at Elizabethtown College for 17 years before retiring at the age of 70.

Patricia was an active member of the Mountwaybia book club since 1965 and a volunteer guide for the Historic Lancaster Walking Tour. She enjoyed painting, bird watching, gardening, anything to do with flowers, and travel. She explored the world extensively in her 20's, including South America, Europe, and rode the rapids of the Colorado River. After a gap of several decades to raise her family, she visited many unique locations around the world including Ecuador, the U.S.S.R., Germany, India, and Nepal.

Patricia had a zest for life and found amusement in the simplest things, like chirping birds or frogs jumping across lily pads. She loved Lancaster County and never lost appreciation for living in such beautiful surroundings. Full of joy and wonderment, she shared her laughter with everyone. She maintained a vivid recollection of her childhood, including every song she ever learned at camp. She was outgoing, personable, and loved by all.

She is survived by her four sons: Richard, husband of Sharon (Columbia); Tom, husband of Lynda (Lititz); David, husband of Kari (Los Angeles); John (Mt. Joy); two grandchildren, Kayla and Vee; four step-grandchildren, Megan, Ryan, Kailyn, and Kyla; five nieces and nephews.

In lieu of flowers, memorial gifts may be made in Patricia's name to Hospice and Community Care, 685 Good Dr., Lancaster, PA 17601. A celebration of life will be held at a later date.

# Tribute Wall

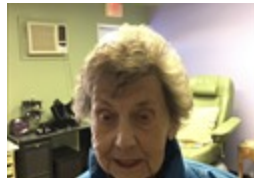
GE

“ We are sad to learn about Pat's passing last year. She stayed with our family on her trip to Ecuador many years ago and we kept contact as pen pals for several years. What a great person! We have fond memories of her in Ecuador and telling us about her life in Lancaster PA. Rest in peace Pat. Galo Estrada Ayala and Ana Cecilia Ayala from Quito, Ecuador

Galo Estrada - March 03, 2025 at 05:29 PM

KD

“ What an awesome lady who will forever be in my memories- I loved going to art classes and picking Pat up on the gulf cart and having a margarita poolside , we had a ton of laughter - we did some theatre shows from time to time and book club at the library - Angelina loved playing hairdresser ( where Pat would be soaked from water being sprayed as she was the client ) I know Angelina had the best experiences..... you cannot ask for a better friend , neighbor , mentor, lady , artist ,lover of nature , history and so much more ..... you will be missed my friend !



Kimberly Ann Deiter - February 29, 2024 at 07:27 PM

DC

“ *David Step, your Mom lived an extraordinary life, both professionally and personally. Thoughts are with you and your family.*

*David Chute*

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**David Chute** - February 22, 2024 at 03:49 PM

HJ

“ *Mrs. Stepanchak was indeed a strong, warm and compassionate woman who I came to know during my youth as a childhood friend and classmate of her son Richard.*

*Mrs. Stepanchak welcomed me into her Chestnut Street home and farm. She was wonderful and will be missed. I last saw her in Columbia about 20 years ago, but thought of her often due to the impact she had upon me and wisdom I learned from her.*

*My prayers are with Richard, the rest of the boys and family. May she rest in peace.*

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**Harvey Gantz, Jr.** - February 21, 2024 at 09:49 PM