



Mrs. Martha Sauer

January 17, 1955 - May 22, 2022

Martha Sauer, loving and devoted wife, sister, daughter, dog-mother, aunt, and friend, passed away on Sunday, May 22, 2022 at the age of 67, with her husband by her side, bathed in soft music and candlelight. This peaceful ending was preceded by a year and a half-long unwinnable battle with ovarian cancer, from which she had been in remission for the previous 14 years.

Born in Pittsfield, MA on January 17, 1955 to George and Elodie Sauer, Martha moved to Stockbridge in 1963 at age 8 and remained there for the rest of her life. Always a lover of outdoor adventures, she spent much of her youth with her many friends, swimming and boating in the Stockbridge Bowl, skiing at Bousquet and Butternut Basin, and getting into whatever mischief a street-smart kid could get into in and around Stockbridge. She was the adorable little blonde sister who would rub her blue ribbon from end-of-the-season ski class races in her older

siblings' empty-handed faces; the friend who would sneak into Tanglewood with you in July of 1970 to see Jethro Tull, The Who, and It's a Beautiful Day; who would "fly" you to school in Elodie's Mustang convertible. She would then hightail it out of there, never really spending much of her precious time sitting in a classroom because her lecture halls were places like the Music Inn, where she saw Springsteen's 3rd stop on the Born to Run Tour. She practiced as he preached, "bust[ing] out of class... get[ting] away from those fools..." (except Jack Spencer),

"learn[ing] more from a 3-minute record than [she] ever learned in school". Oh

my, she loved music, loved to sing and dance, especially at Mundy's (remember Mundy's??), and was a magnetic energy on the dance floor that proved irresistible to other people and the occasional goat. Driven by honesty and love and a shameless desire to be happy every day, Martha never did anything she didn't want to do and always made the people around her feel good about themselves; relentlessly living in the moment and taking you along with her.

Her first serious work gig was as a bartender at the Lion's Den at The Red Lion Inn, where, as one of the famous 3 M's, she ruled the roost with her friends, Marilyn and Mary. Martha was known for recognizing the regulars by their drink instead of their name; 'baking' in the kitchen before opening hours (it was the late 70's, after all); breaking the teeth of a bar back who accidentally got in her way; and, on a particularly rowdy night when an older couple came down from the Inn and ordered a coffee and orange juice, famously responding by asking how they wanted their eggs. The party always continued at her apartment on the Red Lion grounds, where she first honed her skills as an incredible hostess, even then doing it with a tremendous sense of style and taste.

As a young adult - although, in every way that matters, she remained young right up to the end - Martha worked as the Educational Programs Assistant at Jacob's Pillow from 1984-1987 under Norton Owen. The next and ultimately last stop on her work journey was at JPC Capital in Lenox and later in Great Barrington, where she spent the next several decades. She had fortuitously met John Player Crosby through a connection at Jacob's Pillow, and together they began building a notably symbiotic business relationship in 1987. Upon Player's untimely death in 2003, Martha was heartbroken for many years, but continued her work for the extended family until retiring in 2019, managing the Crosby family affairs and most of the daily functions of the business.

In the summer of 1989, soon after beginning her tenure at JPC Capital, Martha bought a charming and humble house just outside of downtown Stockbridge, where she remained until her death. Her father, George, had

attempted to talk her out of the purchase, unable to grasp Martha's vision and deterred by how much labor would be required of him as she began her lifelong process of transforming the space into her dream home. Martha persisted until she'd convinced him, and many of George's original Shaker-style touches still remain; with his help,

Martha made her home effortlessly chic, her taste and style continually evolving over the years, her house reflecting that. If you hadn't dropped in on her in the previous 6 months, you could usually count on some part of it having been dramatically restyled, remodeled, or reconstructed, whether that meant that most of the furniture had been completely rearranged across multiple rooms; a new stone wall had been constructed in her yard by a dear friend with landscaping skills; or her cherished kitchen had been expanded to thrice its previous size and now contained mostly living room furniture.

In addition to beautifying her home, Martha enjoyed the culture, community and scenery of the Berkshires. She took immense pleasure in hiking the Berkshire terrain and strolling around town with her beloved black lab companion, Rupert, and his predecessor, Rover. She had a passion for good food, good wine, and good company, and loved experiencing these simple pleasures in the Berkshire culinary scene as well as at home. She was an exceptional cook and hostess, and delighted in filling her beautiful home with friends and family and music and laughter and her gourmet meals. She was also a master of creating the perfect picnic to enjoy on the Tanglewood lawn, which, as a lover of music, she did often. When Pete Townshend returned to the Lenox stage in the summer of 2017 and reminisced about his last visit in 1970, Martha jumped up, yelling for all to hear that she had been there!

In her final third, Martha developed a love of golf, which eventually led her to her second family at The Country Club of Pittsfield. A few years after joining, she met David Rosenthal, a Berkshire-transplanted Jersey boy who fell smitten. Like so many friends and significant others before him, Martha

transformed David into the best version of himself ever. Together they embarked on a short but memorable journey, chasing Bruce Springsteen around the country and finding the best golf venues at the same time. Knowing that Bruce would sing a particular song on his 60th birthday, David proposed in 'the Pit' at the Barclay's Center in Brooklyn, surrounded by E Street Nation, just after the band played, "I Wanna Marry You". The two were married on August 15, 2016 on Cape Cod, by their dear friend Jay Rhind, in a spot only accessible at low tide and by boat. The marriage license listed coordinates (N 41.778/W 070.16.636) and not a town; a first, according to the Stockbridge Town Clerk. Together, Martha and David continued to enjoy the outdoors, traveling, and entertaining friends at their home in Stockbridge. Upon her retirement, Martha took on what would be her final home renovation project, with her friend, John Peyron, who was the only person allowed to touch the house besides her father. It was a happy job, building the perfect master suite with windows on all four sides, that became bittersweet, as she ultimately passed in that room, leaving just after dawn, surrounded in a heavenly light.

In addition to her beloved canine children, Martha was an adoring and devastatingly cool Rich Auntie Supreme (google it) to a small, multigenerational assortment of nieces and nephews, some related by lineage and others chosen. It was an exceptional privilege to call Martha your aunt. She brought a magnetic, lustrous, ephemeral energy to family gatherings; gave the best gifts even though they were almost never anything you'd asked for; and proffered you a sip of her wine when she ended up stuck at the kids' table. She let you try on her entire lipstick collection and gave you feedback as to which ones were your shades; lent you her longest t-shirt and magically turned it into a dress just by adding a belt, so that you didn't have to wear your wet bathing suit out to lunch after a morning at the town beach, back when you were still shorter than her; and drove you home from dinner down Rattlesnake Mountain Road with the lights off, windows down, heat blasting, at a snail's pace, telling you to watch out for

bears.

She will be forever loved and missed by her adoring husband, siblings Becky Hurwitz and John Sauer, nieces, nephews, their spouses and partners, the many loving and devoted friends who comprised her chosen family, and likely many others whose paths she crossed along the way. It's quite possible that the town of Stockbridge itself will miss Martha.

Donations in her memory can be made to the Laurel Hill Association.