



Susan M. Mathews Ph.D., R.N

May 28, 1946 - May 16, 2022

Obituary: Susan M. Mathews, Ph.D., R.N.

Susan M. Mathews—Mom, Nana, Aunt Sue, Susan, Sue—died suddenly on May 16 at the age of 75. She led a life that we will celebrate in stories for the rest of our days.

Mom was unfailingly generous but never sought attention for her giving. She gave anonymously and often directly to those in need. We have all heard, on meeting someone who knew her, “your mom gave me a job, your mom offered me advice, your mom helped me out...” When it came to gifts for herself, what she wanted most was time together as a family, or a nice hand-written note.

Mom had a morbid sense of humor picked up during years working the overnight shift at the ICU. She understood what was truly sacred—everything else could inspire a laugh.

Mom was a trailblazer and an entrepreneur. Driven by a new vision for health care, she built a business from the ground up, becoming President and COO of a nationally recognized company. During her rise in the corporate world, she was often the only woman in the room.

Mom kept brass knuckles on her desk and always had ice cream in her

freezer. Her favorite restaurant was Sbarro's for the \$5 spaghetti and meatballs. She could make 10 sandwiches from a single can of tuna.

Mom never paid retail. She knew the best Goodwill in Florida (Vero Beach, for the curious), and often made her grandchildren guess how much she'd paid for a pair of shoes or a new sweater. Lower, she would say. Lower

When she looked after her grandchildren, they lived by "Nana Rules," where dessert came first and ice cream was considered a breakfast food. Nana Rules could mean TV all day, a trip to the diner, or a New Years Eve party for grandkids only. At her 70th birthday party, no adults were invited.

Mom was sustained by faith and a fierce love for her family. She loved churches with good music, which amplified her prayers and made her feel closer to God. And for Mom, nothing was more holy than family—the people tied to you by blood and the friends who, over the years, you recognized as kin.

Mom was born in the Bronx on May 28, 1946, the oldest of six children of Thomas and Eileen McKiernan. She grew up on Hardstone Farm, a Holstein dairy farm in Dutchess County, New York. Her childhood on the farm impressed on her the value of hard work and the need to care for those around you. After graduating from Our Lady of Lourdes High School in Poughkeepsie, NY, she earned her RN and began a career in health care that started with two decades as an ICU nurse and led to her co-founding Corporate Health Dimensions, the country's largest management company for medical and pharmacy services for Fortune 500 companies.

Along the way, Mom never stopped educating herself. While raising four young sons at home, she enrolled in college and earned a bachelors, masters, and a doctorate in health administration. In her late 60s she earned a

second masters in bioethics at Union Graduate College/Mount Sinai College of Medicine. To share her experience in healthcare with a broader community, she began writing a column for Life Matters Media, focusing on issues of ethics and justice in healthcare, and later launched her own website (<https://susannmathews.com/>). While living in Florida, she became a Peer Leader and Distinguished Speaker for the Indian River State College Lifelong Learning Institute, offering lectures on bioethical topics. She provided similar lectures at the Academy of Lifelong Learning with Empire State College in Saratoga Springs, NY.

Mom recently moved to the Berkshires, closer to the families of three of her four sons. She was writing a new chapter for herself that included a new home, HD operas at the Mahaiwe, getting involved at Volunteers in Medicine, and making plans to renovate her "Cottage on Castle Street."

Mom is survived by her son Colin and his children Iris, Beck, and Conrad and their mother, Stephanie Iverson; her son Brendan and daughter-in-law Margaret Keller and their children Nora, Fiona, Cormac, and Greta; her son Devin and daughter-in-law Gina Mathews and their children Quinn and Reese; and her son Kiernan and daughter-in-law Susi Sanchez and their children Belen and Paloma. She is also survived by her former husband Robert Mathews, and her siblings Tom (Karen), Mary (Craig), Jeanne (Mark, deceased), Steve (Kathy), and Maura (Pete).

A wake will be held at Roche Funeral Home in Lenox, MA on Monday, May 23 from 4:00 to 7:00 pm. The funeral mass will be celebrated at St. Ann's Catholic Church in Lenox at 10:00 am on Tuesday, May 24.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Volunteers in Medicine (VIM) in Great Barrington, MA.

Previous Events

Visitation

MAY **23**. 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Roche Funeral Home
120 Main Street
P.O. Box 152
Lenox, MA 01240
(413) 637-0699
eroche120fh@gmail.com

Service

MAY **24**. 10:00 AM - 10:45 AM (ET)

St. Ann's Church
134 Main Street
Lenox, MA 01240

Tribute Wall

TL

“ Dear Colin, Iris, Beck, Conrad and Stephanie my deepest condolences to each of you on the passing of your Mom, mother in law and grandmother ...an extraordinary human being and life force. Peace and fond memories. Love one another. Uncle Tom

Beannacht / Blessing

by

John O'Donohue

On the day when the weight deadens on your shoulders and you stumble, may the clay dance to balance you.

And when your eyes freeze behind the grey window and the ghost of loss gets into you, may a flock of colours, indigo, red, green and azure blue, come to awaken in you a meadow of delight.

When the canvas frays in the vessel of thought and a stain of ocean blackens beneath you, may there come across the waters a path of yellow moonlight to bring you safely home.

May the nourishment of the earth be yours, may the clarity of light be yours, may the fluency of the ocean be yours, may the protection of the ancestors be yours.

And so may a slow wind work these words of love around you, an invisible cloak to mind your life.

tom lonnquist - May 24, 2022 at 09:29 AM

KC

“ Kimberly Conlin lit a candle in memory of Susan M. Mathews Ph.D., R.N



Kimberly Conlin - May 23, 2022 at 04:38 PM



“ Large Basket Garden was purchased for the family of Susan M. Mathews Ph.D., R.N.



May 23, 2022 at 09:43 AM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Susan M. Mathews Ph.D., R.N.



May 22, 2022 at 06:20 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Susan M. Mathews Ph.D., R.N.



May 22, 2022 at 09:42 AM

JJ

“ Remembering Susan from our days at OLL. My condolences to the Mathews and McKiernan families on your loss. RIP Susan, well done.

Jerry Joyce



Jerry Joyce - May 22, 2022 at 09:03 AM

MK

“ Dear Mathews Family, I am so incredibly sorry for this tremendous loss in your lives. Your mom was a truly beautiful woman and I will never forget her kindnesses and her profound influence in my life. Deepest condolences to you all. My prayers are with you and your families. Mari Kaymakcian

mari kaymakcian kayajian - May 21, 2022 at 09:58 PM



“ Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Susan M. Mathews Ph.D., R.N.



May 21, 2022 at 09:48 PM

LF

“ Love, Threewalls Family purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Susan M. Mathews Ph.D., R.N.



Love, Threewalls Family - May 21, 2022 at 02:16 PM

LH

“ Love, Karen and Chris Hunt purchased the Basket of Memories for the family of Susan M. Mathews Ph.D., R.N.



Love, Karen and Chris Hunt - May 21, 2022 at 01:58 PM



“ Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Susan M. Mathews Ph.D., R.N.



May 21, 2022 at 01:16 PM



“ Sacred Garden Spray was purchased for the family of Susan M. Mathews Ph.D., R.N.



May 20, 2022 at 05:41 PM

TP

“ The OR ERA Project purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Susan M. Mathews Ph.D., R.N.



The OR ERA Project - May 20, 2022 at 03:51 PM



“ *Country Basket Blooms* was purchased for the family of Susan M. Mathews Ph.D., R.N.



May 20, 2022 at 10:21 AM



“ - *The Faculty Advancement Network (FAN)* purchased the *Sentiments of Serenity Spray* for the family of Susan M. Mathews Ph.D., R.N.



- **The Faculty Advancement Network (FAN)** - May 20, 2022 at 09:08 AM



“ *Dave & Dianne (Garcia) Albertson* purchased the *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum* for the family of Susan M. Mathews Ph.D., R.N.



Dave & Dianne (Garcia) Albertson - May 19, 2022 at 10:28 PM



“ *Memories to Treasure* was purchased for the family of Susan M. Mathews Ph.D., R.N.



May 19, 2022 at 07:18 PM



“ *Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Susan M. Mathews Ph.D., R.N.*



May 19, 2022 at 07:02 PM



“ *I am so sorry for your loss. Sue was someone we all could look up to and I will always remember the tongue in cheek interrogations she did at the family reunion for the girlfriends or boyfriends of family members wanting to become a part of our very large, loving family. She will certainly be thought of with loving thoughts and will be so very missed.*

Kathy McKiernan Hoek

Kathy Hoek - May 19, 2022 at 02:38 PM