



Mary Ellen Catron

August 8, 1947 - March 4, 2025

Mary Ellen (Rysgaard) Catron

Her smile could light up a room...and brighten the lives of those she loved.

Mary Ellen Catron was born August 8, 1947 to George and Frances Rysgaard. She grew up in Northfield, Minnesota and attended Lawrence University in Appleton, Wisconsin where she studied Spanish and where she met the love of her life, Mark. After college, Mary Ellen attended Katherine Gibbs Secretarial School in Boston.

Mark and Mary Ellen married on June 13th, 1970, and then spent two years in upstate New York, where Mary Ellen worked as medical staff secretary at a hospital and at a private school. They moved to Saint Paul in 1972 where Mary Ellen worked for Arthur Andersen Consulting until 1975, when her first child, Drew, was born. Her daughter Betsy arrived in 1977, followed by John (1980) and Bayard (1982). Mary Ellen loved kids, and she spent most of the next 20 years raising her four children and working in the Roseville Area School system, including Parkview Middle school in the media center, and in the District office.

She dedicated herself to her family - cooking, hosting sleepovers, making school lunches, shuttling kids to soccer, band, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, T-ball,

confirmation classes, and after school events; and tucking them in every night. Everyone got special birthday cakes and homemade halloween costumes (some of which have now been worn by her grandchildren). Ever the "Protector", she saved her children from the hazards of trampolines, sharp objects in halloween candy, bears, Salmonella, heights, and tooth decay. She loved reading and crafts-sewing, weaving, stenciling, stamping, and cross-stitch. She enjoyed many hours tending to her flowers and vegetables. Mary Ellen taught us what it meant to be fully engaged in community, investing her energy in Garden Club, Newcomer's Club, Book Club, and, for over 25 years, Children's Hospital Association (North Oaks Guild II). She insisted on family dinner together around the table every night and was never happier than when she could have her whole family together for parties, holidays, and vacations.

She loved planting gladiolas, weeks at the cabin overlooking Lake Superior, hiking, dogs, seashells, foot rubs, the ledge rock at Temperance River, Peanut Buster Parfaits and BLT's made with fresh garden tomatoes. She also made the best peach pie on the planet.

Her adventurous spirit led to many memorable family vacations, including road trips to the west and southwest, ski trips, and the Boundary Waters (where she'd consistently out-fish others in her party). She enjoyed excursions to Japan, Mexico, and Europe. Sanibel Island, Florida was her happy place.

Mary Ellen endured the last many years of her life under attack by the devastating effects of Alzheimers, a war she waged with enormous grace, calm, determination, and a ready smile, and with never a complaint, tear, or sign of anger. She passed peacefully, at home, with Mark at her side, on the evening of March 4.

Mary Ellen was predeceased by her parents, George and Frances Rysgaard,

and is survived by her husband, Mark; their four children, Drew (Christina), Betsy Fischer (Michael), John (Kathryn), and Bayard; by her three grandchildren, Samuel, Wren, and Ansel; her brother Robert Rysgaard; and by many dear friends.

Mary Ellen's family extends heartfelt thanks to the wonderful caregivers of Visiting Angels of Little Canada, and Optage hospice, whose endless compassion enriched her final years.

Memorials honoring Mary Ellen may be directed to the Alzheimer's Association (alz.org), The Nature Conservancy (preserve.nature.org), and the Children's Hospital Association (cha-stpaul.org).

Family and friends are invited to gather on June 21, 2025, at 1:30 P.M. at Peace United Methodist Church, 5050 Hodgson Rd., Shoreview to celebrate Mary Ellen's life.

Cemetery Details

Hillside Crematory

2610 19th Ave NE
Minneapolis, MN 55418

Previous Events

Memorial Gathering

JUN 21. 1:30 PM - 3:30 PM (CT)

Peace United Methodist Church
5050 Hodgson Road
Shoreview, MN 55126

Tribute Wall

JD

“ *Mark, I just saw the obituary online. Beautiful! Condolences and prayers to you and your family. Jim Dunn*

Jim Dunn - March 20, 2025 at 09:46 PM

MB

“ *To the Catron family, please accept our condolences for your loss. We met and knew Mary Ellen through our local Boy Scout troop when our two sons were members of the troop. Thoughts, prayers and hugs for your loss. Mick and Mary Banholzer, Shoreview MN*

Mick and Mary Banholzer - March 16, 2025 at 06:59 AM