Memorial Minute for Wendy Parker Knudsen

04/21/1952-12/18/2024

Wendy was born in Arlington, Massachusetts, the daughter of Eugene and Jane Parker. She attended high school in Plainfield, NJ, studied at MIT and graduated from Wellesley College. Wendy attended Stanford Medical School, worked in a Family Practice residency at Emmanual Hospital in Portland, OR, before switching to anesthesiology. She completed her residency at OHSU. She followed her resident with fellowship year in obstetrical anesthesiology at a Navy Hospital in San Diego, CA. Wendy practiced for twenty-eight years for Kaiser Permanente in the Portland area, where her principal interests were pediatric and high-risk obstetrics anesthesia. Helping her patients was one of her great joys.

Wendy found her home in Quaker Meeting while in college. Between 1969 and 1972 she protested the Vietnam War, helped conscientious objectors find legal ways to avoid military service, and participated in the emerging Earth Day and women's movements. She appreciated Quakers fighting for and upholding the dignity and worth of each person. She saw Friends searching for the light of God in each of us and nurturing that light so that all may feel valuable and worthy. Wendy joined Palo Alto Friends Meeting (PYM) in 1975, and she and Mark Knudsen married at Cambridge Friends Meeting (NEYM) in 1976. She transferred her membership to Multnomah Monthly Meeting (NPYM) in 1978, and to Bridge City Friends Meeting (NPYM) upon its establishment in 2004.

The highlight of Wendy's life was the birth of their daughter, Arielle. Her heart and love poured into Arielle as she took her steps towards adulthood; a love that expanded to Arielle's children as they were born. She shared with them her love of baking and reading, including reading the books they chose so she could discuss them with the boys. At night she rubbed their feet to help them relax and unwind, listening to their thoughts and observations about the world around them. They hold their memories of her tightly by carrying on her traditions, including elaborately layered ice cream cones.

Wendy never wished to be defined by her health. Shortly after her marriage to Mark she was diagnosed with lupus, and told she would never practice medicine. She persevered

through lupus, a clotting disorder, a kidney transplant, and a heart valve replacement. A “realistic optimist,” Wendy went to work doing what she could to make every day her best.

Wendy enjoyed traveling, visiting most of the states in the USA, Japan, many European countries, and regular family visits to the east coast. When home, she hiked Forest Park, walked Oregon beaches, and kayaked the many rivers in the area. During Arielle’s younger years Wendy led a Girl Scout troop, lined the fields for St. Mary’s Academy lacrosse team, and hosted a German exchange student. Wendy was well-known for her cookies and bread-baking which she shared freely with delighted friends and neighbors. She provided meals for Friends after surgery and served on Hospitality Committee for BCFM social times and Memorial Meetings.

During her final illness Wendy asked those who were able to donate blood in her honor. Wendy died on December 18, 2024, after a short struggle with lymphoma. She is survived and much missed by her husband, Mark; daughter, Arielle; son-in-law; three brothers and a sister; three grandchildren and many nieces and nephews.

Wendy is gone now from our physical presence, and we grieve her loss. We know Wendy would want us to remember that God resides in each of us, and to seek God’s light in ourselves and in each other. She would encourage us to do what we can to make each today the best day of our lives.