



Nancy Lynn Penkin

March 17, 1945 - January 7, 2025

Nancy, Nan, Mom, Cici as we all knew her was the wife, daughter, sister, mother, grandmother, aunt, cousin, and friend to so many who loved her. Born near the end of WWII, Nancy was a quiet and joyful baby who grew up into adulthood as a creative, sometimes mischievous, and eternally curious person who lived her entire life surrounded by generations of family. As she aged and her family expanded, she anchored her day-to-day life in loving relationships punctuated by regular visits and deep, sometimes hours long conversations that were rooted in curiosity, kindness, compassion, fairness, open-mindedness, insight, and humor.

Nancy was born in Brooklyn, NY and lived in Queens, NY, Sarasota, Florida then Manhattan where she graduated high school in 1963. Nancy attended Centenary College In New Jersey and graduated in 1965 with a (AA) Associate of Arts degree. She married Stanley Penkin following her graduation and subsequently became the mother to Stacy followed by twins, Amy and Lori, three years later. Nancy spent her free time volunteering at the local hospital, developing her superior talents as a home cook, and forever testing her skills with various sewing and crafting projects with and for her children.

As her first marriage to Stanley ended and her daughters became school aged, Nancy sought work through a Temp Agency to discern which direction

to go. She was also still engaged in community volunteer work at White Plains hospital which was highly varied and provided unexpected opportunities that would inform her future career. Her keen sense of smell and ability to describe odors was notable, to the point of providing key information to doctors to help them with diagnoses. While assigned as a secretary through the temp agency Nancy's interview for permanent employment went so well, they made her a job offer. Nancy's community work and experience in the medical setting was the exposure she needed to cement her professional path ahead.

In October 1977, Nancy started at Richardson-Merrell's Vicks Research & Development as an Assistant Laboratory Technician working for a new service group performing Sensory Evaluation for Product Development and Consumer Testing. Nancy's background and unique abilities allowed her to develop skills and techniques that pushed the boundaries of innovation in her field. When denied a promotion because her accomplishments were deemed less significant because she only had an associate degree, Nancy went to night classes at The University of New Rochelle and graduated in 1983 with a bachelor's degree. She was then immediately promoted.

In 1985, Procter & Gamble (P&G) bought Richardson-Vicks. That same year, Stacy won one of the last two Richardson Scholarships awarded to children of Richardson-Vicks employees. This scholarship included \$2500 for college tuition and a summer internship at Vicks Research and afforded Nancy the opportunity and pleasure to work alongside her daughter.

During Nancy's years at Vicks, she worked hard to be recognized as a leader in sensory evaluation on all the company's products. P&G had an in-house sensory group that performed tests on products across many businesses. Nancy became a sought-out resource at P&G's technical centers in Cincinnati Ohio. Nancy's capabilities were tested using P&G's proprietary methods to evaluate employees. She scored in the top 3% of anyone they've ever tested.

This affirmed Nancy's confidence and expertise. By 1989 Nancy decided it was time to venture out by starting her own consulting company. After months of planning, Sensory Signals opened for business in 1990 and operated until 2015 as an Ohio, then Oregon based business. Nancy's clients ranged from startups to those listed in the S&P 500.

Not only did her job at Vick's launch her career, on the day of her job interview she noticed and was also noticed by the long-legged-lab-coat-wearing scientist and love of her life, Gary, who she married in 1981 in her mother Jean's New York City apartment with her daughters at her side and further witnessed by her closest family and friends.

Nancy and Gary, both scientists, relocated first to Southbury, Connecticut, then to Morrow, Ohio, and finally to Oregon City, Oregon with each home thoughtfully chosen to ensure their property included a grove of trees where they could delight in the sounds of wind and birds in the trees and nature that surrounded them. This was a very intentional shift from their shared roots in New York City. Nancy referred to her home as her tree house where, as an avid reader she enjoyed quiet times of her retirement devouring her newest novel. Beyond reading books, Nancy would be keeping up with current events, listening to shared Spotify playlists with her grandchildren, discovering new podcasts, appreciating art or design, knitting, and catching up with family and friends near or far, by phone or FaceTime.

Nancy had a love of sports and would watch games on tv. Nancy's favorite game to watch was football, though she had a keen interest in most sports. She would knit when watching games. During NFL games Nancy was ahead of officials and replays. She always got the call right. Beyond all of her activities, she would also be happy to pause to simply enjoy gazing at the trees, perfectly content in her surroundings with Gary and accompanied by

her beloved dogs.

As Nancy's family in Oregon continued to grow to include her daughters' partners (John, Eric, and Zach) and their children (Samantha, Margo, Simon, Lucy, Eliana, Viv, Jackson, and Bailey), she knew her Mother Jean must join the tribe, locally. She facilitated moving Jean to Oregon to delight in the family as its matriarch. Nancy was a devoted daughter who spoke with Jean every day and visited often. No topic was off limits during their daily calls and visits which could last minutes to hours, and always with a long goodbye.

Not only did Nancy keep up day-to-day with her mother, she was always in the loop to know about the lives and activities of her sisters Alice and Margaret or her cousins as well as their partners, children, and grandchildren. Nancy was often the messenger to her own daughters or grandchildren, about the events in the lives of their aunts, uncles, cousins and other extended family. You couldn't mistake the level of family devotion as her kitchen refrigerator was "wallpapered" in family photos.

Nancy will forever be remembered as the woman who always greeted you with a beaming smile, a warm hug, ensuring one felt not only welcome, but also special. She lived her life enjoying all the colors of the world, appreciating all moments - even those that were simple or small. Beyond her highly developed professional sensory skills, she had the ability to taste and smell with a refined palette, including single malt scotch and Cuban cigars she was known to enjoy with her sons-in-law. She cherished the scent and beauty of the first gardenia of spring and was surrounded by fresh cut flowers Gary lovingly brought home for her every week.

Her creativity abounded and all of her children and grandchildren are proud owners of custom-made knitted blankets. She was also known as the "stuffies" doctor and restored her grandchildren's well-loved blankets and stuffed

animals that required mending. Nancy was always ready to jump on the phone or FaceTime to advise on the practical things such as what seasonings to add to the evening's meal, how to get the stain out of a new shirt, or what was currently on her reading list. Beyond the practical, she was adored by family and friends of all generations as she offered fresh perspectives on navigating life's personal or professional challenges, acted as their biggest cheerleader, and truly allowed whoever she spoke with to feel seen and understood. She is described as having the softest shoulder to lean on or into. She encouraged, and more importantly, modeled what it meant to be unapologetically and authentically herself, loving and living fully. More than anything, she encouraged us all to be the best versions of ourselves. We are all the better for having loved and been loved by her and she will be deeply missed.

Gary reflects upon his life with Nancy, feeling the sadness of not having new memories to make, but cherishes the ones he has. In his words to his beloved wife, "My beautiful girl, rest in peace."

Her family honors her lifelong love of reading and in lieu of flowers the family welcomes donations made in Nancy's name to www.reachoutandread.org

A celebration of life will be held as an open house on Saturday March 8th in Oregon City from 1pm-5pm. A virtual option will be made available for those unable to participate in person.

Tribute Wall

MA

“ Beautifully written. You have captured Nancy’s spirit, her zeal for life, her love for her family, and cherished friendships, her generosity in giving of herself, her gifts, talents, and mostly her time to all of us. ❤️🌸❤️

It has taken me awhile to be able to openly share my thoughts as I've been holding my memories of Nan close. Everyday, I think of Nan and my thoughts are with you and for the sweet memories to bring you peace and comfort.

Gary, you were her partner, her best friend and her rock. You two have modeled a true partnership in marriage, based on love, respect, understanding, and compassion. One that I admire and strive to emulate.

Stacy, Amy and Lori: Nancy would give me updates and was so proud of each of you, growing up to be the amazing women you are today, following your calling and your passions. She delighted in your kids and was just as proud of each of them, each so talented and gifted in their own ways, finding their paths in life.

Nancy was first, a colleague in my first real job out of college (all the way across the country where I knew no one), a mother-figure who welcomed me into her home and shared her family, then through the years we enjoyed a life-long friendship and sisterhood. Distance may have separated us, but we knew we were just a phone call away, always there for each other. I appreciated and valued her words of wisdom and even when she gave it to me straight, when I needed it. =) We've shared the ups and downs life brings us, filled with joy, laughter and sometimes tears. A true friend who only wanted what was best for me and my family.

I'm thinking of you all, holding you close in my thoughts and prayers and sending my love.

And to Nancy: I will forever treasure our friendship and sisterhood.

*You are a true gem and I will miss your great big tight hugs and I will miss you dearly.
Love, Maisie*

Maisie - February 03, 2025 at 09:56 PM

AP

“ *I miss you!*”



Amy Penkin - January 21, 2025 at 11:03 PM