



Catherine Wolhowe Reistrup

MAY 16, 1944 - JUL 9, 2022



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Catherine Wolhowe Reistrup

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Catherine Wolhowe Reistrup passed peacefully and painlessly from this life July 9, 2022, at Hospice of the Chesapeake in Pasadena, MD, after a long battle with cancer.

She is survived by her husband of 47 years, John Valdemar Reistrup; by his sons James and Olaf Reistrup; by his daughter Christine Bottagaro; and by seven grandchildren. She is also survived by her sister, Ann Wolhowe Miller, her brothers Mark, Erik and Karl Wolhowe, and by many nieces and nephews in the Reistrup, Wolhowe and Miller clans for whom she was a loving and attentive aunt.

Catherine Gloria Wolhowe was born on May 16, 1944, to Casper and Stella Larson Wolhowe in Bismarck, ND. She kept that name once she was established in her profession as a lawyer even after she married. She also kept the byline with which she began as a young writer—Cathe Wolhowe. In recent years, after she and John moved to Annapolis, she became known to friends, neighbors and fellow choristers in the U.S. Naval Academy Protestant Chapel Chorale as Cathe Reistrup.

She was a vibrant and empathetic presence in every role she took on. Perhaps her most lasting and memorable qualities were loyalty and perseverance.

Cathe was raised in Miles City, Montana, where her father was superintendent of the Pine Hills correctional facility for youthful offenders. She graduated from Custer County High School there in 1962 and entered Luther College in Decorah, Iowa, where she continued to pursue her lifelong musical interests of singing alto in the chorus and playing the clarinet.

While there Cathe was selected to be an exchange student at historically black Spelman College for women in Atlanta, Georgia, where she met and interacted with prominent civil rights leaders of the period and began her lifelong pursuit of social justice.



Obituary

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When she wanted to join the Mississippi Summer Project in 1964, however, her father drew the line. He insisted she return to Montana and finish college at the University of Montana. Graduating with a bachelor's degree in history and journalism, she went to work for the United Press International wire service in Helena.

Selected by Montana Senators Mike Mansfield and Lee Metcalf as the first female Montana Congressional Fellow, she went to work for them on Capitol Hill. While employed full time during the day she attended Georgetown University Law Center at night until she earned a Juris Doctor degree.

Afterward she worked for the Appalachian Regional Commission and the philanthropic staff of John D. Rockefeller III (which finally gave her the chance to go to Mississippi and advance the cause of civil rights). She returned briefly to journalism as a reporter for The Washington Post before being admitted to the bar in North Dakota, her native state.

Cathe started her legal career as a trial attorney for the Federal Trade Commission, handling antitrust and consumer protection cases, writing amicus briefs for the Supreme Court and developing policy for implementing new laws passed by Congress.

In 1975 she married John Reistrup and moved to Toronto, Canada, where his newspaper career had taken him. Despite retaining her American citizenship she was selected to work for the Ontario Law Commission, a group of five distinguished members of the profession appointed for life to recommend changes to provincial law. There she drafted proposed revisions on bankruptcy law that were accepted not only by the Commission but the Provincial Parliament and ultimately the federal Parliament of Canada.

Upon returning to the United States, she was selected as special assistant to the General Counsel of the Community Services Administration, where was assigned to direct the audit and inspection division in cleaning up outstanding cases of waste, fraud and abuse uncovered by the House Government Operations Committee.

Once again moving because of her husband's work, Cathe was selected to head the Seattle/King County office of public defense and clear up staffing and budget problems uncovered by the local governments. Then, upon request of the mayor of Seattle, she succeeded in settling a sex-discrimination complaint by women electrical workers against their employer, Seattle City Light.



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When her family moved back to Washington, DC, Cathe returned to Capitol Hill as Senator John Melcher's Legislative Director. When Senator Melcher was defeated in 1988, she went to work for the two-person Office of General Counsel & Congressional Liaison at the Endowment for the Humanities under Chairman Lynn Cheney.

Leaving federal service, Cathe accepted a private contract from the Department of Education to oversee a complex backlog of 125 outstanding employment cases. Upon successful completion of that contract, she won a multi-million-dollar, set-aside contract with the Department of Defense for handling its civilian employee issues at military installations around the country and drafting its final agency decisions. Upon completion of the contract, she represented supervisory federal employees before the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Merit Systems Protection Board, the Office of Special Counsel, the Department of Labor and the Office of Personnel Management.

After closing her office in McLean, Virginia, and moving to Annapolis with her husband, she served as Legislative Director for Delegate Susan McComas, ranking member of the House Judiciary Committee.

Throughout, Cathe sustained her love of music, singing alto with the Calgary Festival Chorus, McLean Choral Society, Redeemer Lutheran Church in McLean and ultimately the U.S. Naval Academy Protestant Chapel Chorale. A gourmet cook, she delighted in bringing friends and family together over feasts she had prepared. She also remained active with women's groups including the American Association of University Women and the P.E.O. Sisterhood, a philanthropic and educational organization with the motto "Women Helping Women."

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests that donations to honor her may be sent to an endowment she helped establish to provide scholarships for women pursuing healthcare studies at nearby Anne Arundel Community College:

Women Helping Women at Anne Arundel #8555

P.E.O. Foundation

Treasurer's Office

3700 Grand Ave

Des Moines, IA 50312




Events


Catherine Wolhowe Reistrup

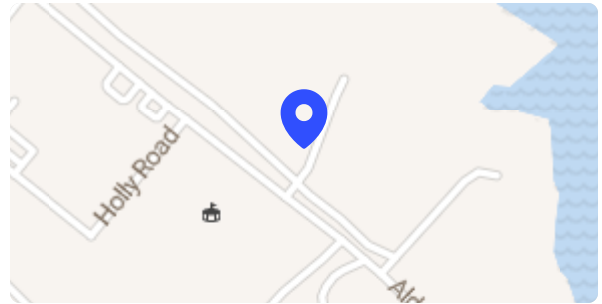
MAY 16, 1944 - JUL 9, 2022

Funeral Service

 **Tuesday**, September 6, 2022

 10:30 AM ET

 **United States Naval Academy Chapel**
Annapolis MD 21402





Tribute Wall

Catherine Wolhowe Reistrup

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Sherri Ledesma & Family sent a Beautiful Heart Bouquet to the Reistrup family.



September 2 at 11:53 AM



Anonymous sent a Peaceful White Lilies Basket to the Reistrup family.



August 21 at 12:13 PM



Anonymous sent a Peaceful White Lilies Basket to the Reistrup family.



August 15 at 11:09 AM



John Miller posted:

Oh John, I am so sorry to hear this news. My deepest sympathy. I remember you and Cathe entertaining at your house in Mississauga, Ontario, many times with grace (hers) and good fellowship (yours). It was always a good time, made more charming by an amazing couple of unique personalities. I did not know she had a long battle with cancer. I will remember her with much fondness, now resting in peace. Be well.

August 11 at 5:38 AM



Olaf Reistrup shared 5 photos to the **Sidelights** album.



July 14 at 10:58 AM



Tribute Wall

Catherine Wolhowe Reistrup

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Jim Moody posted:

A great lady who was always looking out for those not so fortunate, as in her legal work. Also quite a loyal individual as she followed John around North America as he pursued his journalistic career. Cathe had a great sense of humor and it was on display when we got together for the few lunches we did "On the Severn". I afraid we did not do it enough. She had a life "Well Lived" and we will miss her!JRM

July 20 at 5:03 AM



J.V. Reistrup shared 2 photos to the **Sidelights** album.



July 18 at 1:28 PM



Erika Hanson Brown posted:

I grew up with Cathe in Montana. I learned to swim with Cathe. I was in Brownies and Girl Scouts with Cathe. When we were in college, I shared a very convenient rental with Cathe (University of Montana), at her kind invitation. I was at Cathe's wedding to her gracious and loving John. I spent some time with Cathe in Annapolis before she was diagnosed with the cancer.And - like all of us who grew up with Cathe - am terribly saddened by the news of her death.

July 17 at 12:03 PM



Frank Titus lit a candle in honor of Catherine.

RIP Cathe.



July 17 at 11:03 AM



John Reistrup posted:

We are heartbroken over Cathe's passing and miss her terribly. Cathe was such a fighter and had been through so much. We will miss her wonderful traditions including Thanksgiving, Easter and the many Birthdays. She was always willing to host a party and to celebrate a special event. We will honor her passion for food with the special Family recipe book she gave us. Over the years she became a close special friend, in addition to being our Aunt. She is already so missed. Love, Leslie and John Reistrup

July 16 at 11:00 AM



Tribute Wall

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J.V. Reistrup shared a photo to the **Sidelights** album.



July 14 at 12:29 PM



Catherine Fitzpatrick August 3 at 6:12 PM

We still have the Redskins Hog and one of the Demetri bears! Cathe had so many wonderful talents and such generosity!



John Reistrup July 18 at 4:26 AM

While working full time as an attorney in Seattle in the early 1980s, Cathe started a business called Sew Nice to provide employment for refugee women from Vietnam. She talked the local Church Council into providing the women with sewing machines and talked two factory owners into donating scrap sweater materials and stuffing with which the women could craft teddy bears. Cathe then managed to sell them through ski shops and J.C. Penney, providing a stream of income for the refugees.



Carol Keyser posted:

Cathe was such an inspiration to me and our project group "women helping women". She was so competent, courageous and caring all at once. She was the leader of our group and had visions on where our little scholarship can go and grow. To say she will be missed is too ordinary because she was extraordinary person.

July 14 at 11:29 AM



Margaret Passalacqua posted:

Cathe's talent and determination are the primary reasons the Women Helping Women Scholarship Fund will proudly award the first scholarships to women at Anne Arundel Community College in 2023. Godspeed, Grand Lady.

July 14 at 10:58 AM



J.V. Reistrup July 18 at 7:16 AM

This PEO project kept her going in her final months. Bless your hearts.



Olaf Reistrup shared 5 photos to the **Sidelights** album.

July 20 at 5:39 AM





Media

Catherine Wolhowe Reistrup

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OR



JR

J.V. Reistrup shared 2 photos to the **Sidelights** album.

July 18 at 1:28 PM



Cathe & Gina



Thanksgiving 2019



J.V. Reistrup shared a photo to the **Sidelights** album.

July 14 at 12:29 PM



Cathe with a Sew Nice teddy bear



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Catherine by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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