

IN MEMORIAM: CAROL THACHER

July 28, 1939 – March 15, 2015

Carol Thacher was born in Long Beach, California, the oldest child of a U.S Navy captain and a teacher. She lived in several states throughout her childhood and adolescence as the family traveled with the Navy, eventually settling in Minnesota.

She died in March 2015, just four months after being diagnosed with an aggressive form of lung cancer. Preceded in death by her father, Robert Thacher, and her husband, Steven Ross, she left behind her mother, three sisters, a brother, her loving daughter and step-daughter, four grandchildren, and countless friends and admirers.

Carol had two careers in her lifetime – teacher and attorney – and did both professions a great credit with her wise, thoughtful counsel. The quality that made her such a trusted lawyer had already been developing for years during her time as a 5th grade teacher at Highlands School in Edina. Carol often described herself as a problem-solver. She could draw a map of downtown Minneapolis with startling precision, explain complicated ideas in straightforward terms, and mediate even the most acrimonious disputes. She was brilliant and charismatic, loved and trusted by students, colleagues, clients, family and friends.

A graduate of Iowa's Grinnell College who earned a bachelor's degree in psychology, Carol taught for 11 years before deciding she was ready for a new challenge. After she left the classroom, Carol earned a master's degree in educational psychology from the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis and took some time off to be with her infant daughter, born at the end of 1972. Within a couple of years, Carol realized she was suited more for a professional life than a domestic one and started classes at William Mitchell College of Law in St. Paul, graduating in 1978.

Carol's business law career spanned three decades and three law firms, one of them with her own name. She began her career with Robins, Davis, and Lyons (now Robins Kaplan) and became one of their first women partners. She then struck out on her own for several years before joining Gray Plant Mooty for the last few years of her career, both as an attorney and a mentor to new attorneys.

Carol also generously donated her time and talent to several organizations during her lifetime, most notably the boards for the Sister Kenny Foundation, Abbott Northwestern Hospital, and Creatives for Causes, a nonprofit founded by her sister, Sue Crolick.

Carol was a warm, affectionate, and charismatic woman, known for solving virtually any kind of problem. She loved bridge and movies with her friends, reading to her grandchildren, and spending time with her daughters. She laughed easily and worked hard. We miss her so much.

-- Marta Carol Drew, Carol's daughter