



## Patricia Kennedy

March 17, 1941 - January 30, 2016

The memorial service for Patricia Kennedy will be held at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, July 16, at the First Congregational United Church of Christ in Wadena. A one hour visitation will be held at the church on Saturday.

Patricia Grace Kennedy, an accomplished mezzo-soprano vocalist, actress and pianist, passed away peacefully on January 30, 2016, in Wilton, Connecticut. The cause of death was heart failure following complications of Alzheimer's disease. Pat would have been 75 this year.

Pat was born on March 17, 1941 in St. Paul, Minnesota and spent her childhood in Wadena, except for the years the family spent with her grandparents in Deadwood, South Dakota while her father served in the Navy during World War II.

Pat graduated from Wadena High School in 1959 as co-salutatorian of her class and as a vital contributor to the School's concert band and choir. In the preceding summer Pat had been elected Governor of Minnesota's Girls' State, and went on to represent the state at Girl's Nation in Washington, D.C.

Following high school, Pat attended Vassar College in Poughkeepsie, New York, graduating in 1963 with a Bachelor of Arts in Music (*magna cum laude*) and a minor in English. In 1968, Pat earned a Master of Arts in Music Education at the Teachers College of Columbia University.

New York City's Upper West Side became Pat's home following her years at Vassar. In 1964, she gave her first performance in the city at Carnegie Hall's Recital Hall with two other aspiring young singers who were then working with Pat at the famed Papagallo shoe boutique in New York. In 1966, Pat joined The College Board and began a long and successful career in a variety of administrative executive roles, including serving as administrative assistant to three successive presidents of the Board. Pat worked at The College Board until 1996.

Pat did not let her “day job” stop her from pursuing her life’s main passions of singing and theatrical performance. She continued to study acting and voice, including at the Julliard School of Music and with leading singers at New York’s Metropolitan Opera. She regularly sang as a soloist in a variety of professional, university and church venues in and around New York City. She also taught voice to aspiring singers in New York. She was always happy to sing on visits to her beloved hometown of Wadena, including many Christmas Eve performances at the United Methodist Church and other town events and gatherings.

In the early 1980s Pat joined the Actor’s Equity Association and began to audition in New York City and with regional professional theaters up and down the East Coast. For the next fifteen years she appeared in featured roles in dozens of professional theater and musical productions in and around New York. Her roles included Mrs. Lovett in Sweeney Todd, Mother Superior in Nunsense, Aunt Eller in Oklahoma! (Music Theatre North), Mrs. Paroo in The Music Man, M’Lynn in Steel Magnolias, Mrs. Pearce in My Fair Lady and Aunt Queenie in Bell, Book and Candle.

In 1992 Pat auditioned for the national tour of the acclaimed Broadway revival of Guys and Dolls. Of the many actors who auditioned, Pat was the only one who belted out a Salvation Army hymn and accompanied herself on the trombone. Broadway director Jerry Zaks gave her a part on the spot. The two-year Guys and Dolls tour, which included an extended stay in Japan, was one of the high points in Pat’s performing career.

Pat had more years of singing, performing and working in New York after the tour, but the challenges of early-onset Alzheimer’s eventually led to her move in 2009 from West 74th Street in Manhattan to an assisted living facility near her brother John in Connecticut. Characteristically, on Pat’s first day there, she played the piano and sang for the residents. Pat lived at Wilton Meadows until her death.

Pat’s singular musical gifts, her drive and professionalism on stage, her zest for music and theater, her spirited love of New York City, her warmth and generosity, and her readiness - any day, any time- for a good laugh, are sorely missed by her family and friends and by all those she worked with in music and theater.

Pat was predeceased by her father, District Judge Charles W. Kennedy and her mother, Sigrid Kennedy. Pat is survived by her brothers Charles, of Wadena, Minnesota, and John, of Westport, Connecticut; uncle, Otto Rempel, of San Mateo, California and by many nephews, nieces, grandnephews and grandnieces who will miss their Aunt Patty.

Burial will be next to her parents in the Wadena Cemetery.

# Cemetery

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## Wadena Cemetery

Franklin Drive & 5th St. SW  
Wadena, MN, 56482

# Events

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**JUL** **Visitation** 09:30AM - 10:30AM

**16**

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First Congregational United Church of Christ  
Colfax Ave. & 1st St. SW, Wadena, MN, US, 56482

**JUL** **Service** 10:30AM - 11:30PM

**16**

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First Congregational United Church of Christ  
Colfax Ave. & 1st St. SW, Wadena, MN, US, 56482

# Comments

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“ A tribute video has been added.



Schuller Family Funeral Homes - June 29, 2016 at 12:09 PM



“ Pat brought so much fun into our lives.  
In loving memory,  
Sara  
Sara - July 11, 2016 at 10:09 AM



“ Oh, the fun we three had, walking to high school every day...taking turns carrying Peggy's french horn!  
Wonderful tribute to a precious friend...Love, Pat Smith Larson

Patricia Smith Larson - June 30, 2016 at 07:50 PM

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“ 51 files added to the album LifeTributes



Schuller Family Funeral Homes - June 29, 2016 at 12:04 PM

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“ Tammie Klawitter lit a candle in memory of Patricia Kennedy



**Tammie Klawitter** - June 28, 2016 at 05:33 PM