



After a brave struggle with cancer, Patricia Turner Wiltsie passed away peacefully on May 2, 2010. Pat was born in Yonkers, NY to Harold Turner and Anna (Coyne) Turner on July 26, 1930. Both of her parents were recent immigrants from Canada and Harold remained employed through the depression as an electrical engineer, leading up to a vice presidency of American Electric Power. During Pat's early teens, the family moved to Waynesburg, OH (near Canton), where she attended high school.

Pat then studied for three years at Ohio's Oberlin College before transferring to the University of California, Berkeley, from which she graduated with honors in physical chemistry. Just before transferring, she met David Hastings Wiltsie (ironically a PhD candidate at "Cal") on a camping trip he was guiding for her family in Algonquin Provincial Park in Canada.

The couple married in September 1951 and soon moved to Bishop, CA, a beautiful, but remote town in the Owens Valley east of the Sierra Nevada. Dave was employed there by the U.S. Navy (after having served 18 months in Pacific combat at the end of World War II). While Pat kept home fires burning for an eclectic mix of scientists and roughnecks, Dave worked both on research with field mice and helping to construct the now-renowned Barcroft High Altitude Research Station at 12,470' elevation in the adjacent White Mountains.

In 1952 Pat gave birth to their son Gordon and a year later to daughter Anne. After leaving the Navy, Dave became a renowned taxidermist and Pat ran all financial affairs for a sequence of increasingly successful businesses in Bishop. These included Dave Wiltsie Taxidermy, Dave Wiltsie's Western Den Shop (a gift store that became famous catering to tourists flocking to the eastern Sierra) and ultimately Motivation Development, Inc., in which the couple wrote, published and self-marketed an acclaimed series of basic mathematics, life skills and music textbooks that became bestsellers to schools across the United States and Canada.

Pat and Dave were both passionate about wilderness and spent much of their free time hiking in the Sierra Nevada, driving with their children throughout the American West and Canada, and, finally, boating, camping and fishing on Lake of the Woods, near Kenora, Ontario. During this period Pat also served on the Inyo County (CA) Planning Commission, including a term as the Director.

When the couple retired, they moved to Red Lodge, MT, which had fascinated Dave ever since his family was one of the first to motor across the Beartooth Highway in 1936. They loved the community and forged many dear friendships there. By 1999, however, Dave was growing frail and they moved again to Bozeman, MT to be closer to their son Gordon and his family.

As in Red Lodge, the couple - and after Dave's death- Pat, herself, built many fast friendships in Bozeman. She was active in the League of Women Voters, Wonderlust, book clubs and discussion groups pondering mysteries of the infinite - one of her lifelong passions.

Pat was preceded in death by Dave, who passed away in 2005. She is survived by her brother and sister-in-law Stephen and Kathie Turner of Poughkeepsie, NY, sister Margaret Laurange of Valatie, NY, daughter Anne Vaniea of Pittsburgh, PA, son and daughter-in-law Gordon and Meredith Wiltsie of Bozeman, MT, and grandchildren Kami, Bonnie and Russell Vaniea and Benjamin and Nicholas Wiltsie.

During her passage from this life, Pat expressed her profound gratitude to the many health care providers who gave her exceptional attention, to Bozeman Deaconess Hospice, and to her many friends and relatives from Bishop, Red Lodge, Bozeman, Lake of the Woods, and beyond, who made her life full of joy and enabled her to pass away with peace and love in her heart.

Pat has requested that in lieu of flowers, friends remember her with a more-lasting gift to the Gallatin Valley Land Trust, an organization devoted to preserving open spaces in what Native Americans long called "The Valley of Flowers."

Gordon and Meredith will be hosting an informal celebration of Pat's life at her condominium between three and five pm on Saturday, May 8, which, fittingly, is International Migratory Bird Day.