



Caryl Joyce Sawtelle

January 29, 1958 - December 31, 2025

Rye- After defying Darwin's theory (with a sense of humor) for 67 years, Caryl Joyce Sawtelle of Rye, NH died on December 31, 2025.

Caryl was born in Melrose, MA, the daughter of the late Jean E. and Joseph G. Sawtelle Jr. of Newcastle, NH. She grew up in Wakefield, MA, but her adventurous spirit led her to living and working in Florida, then studying (and hang-gliding) near San Diego, CA. She returned to the Northeast where she always felt at home among fellow friendly and down-to-earth New Englanders.

She settled in Rye, NH where she lived for nearly 40 years, and raised her daughter Sarah E. Sawtelle, of San Francisco, CA. She was a foster parent to two siblings and later an infant, the latter whom she was beyond thrilled to meet again last year as a grown, healthy adult.

She adored animals, and gave a loving home to exceptional pets, including Katmandu, Harriet, and Reuben.

Caryl graduated from the University of New Hampshire with degrees in Social Work and Business Management. Her career in social work included work at Crossroads House and the Family Service Association. She also worked in radio, including local station WQMI, and bookkeeping. She took great care in her work as a hands-on house renovator and property manager, often proudly

doing the landscaping, interior decorating, repairs and painting to the highest standard.

Caryl loved skiing, kayaking, biking, reading and live music. She enjoyed time outdoors, particularly when looking for a Geocache, exquisite shells on the beaches of Florida, or beautiful rocks on the coast of Rye. For her it wasn't about the treasure, it was about the thrill of the search. If she found she needed cheering up, impromptu roadside trash cleanups or random acts of kindness toward strangers were most heartening. She always found the greatest fulfillment in giving to others, and poured limitless dedication into what she believed would make the world better.

Caryl devoted untold hours towards projects forwarding her father's and parents' legacy of supporting the Seacoast community, as well as preserving and celebrating the maritime history of our region. Always concerned about the state of our planet, she was also a loyal supporter of the Seacoast Science Center at Odiorne Point.

No one was more loved or important to Caryl than her daughter, Sarah. She was a deeply dedicated mother who put her whole heart into giving Sarah an exceptional, happy childhood. Their treasured adventures together included kayaking and biking in Sanibel, Florida, seeing the Grand Canyon, whale-watching and hiking in Maui, and a road trip up the California Coast. She transmitted to her daughter a great admiration for the natural world, compassion and admiration for animals, and care for other people.

In addition to her daughter, Sarah, she leaves siblings Gayle Sawtelle of Belmont, MA, Susan Sawtelle of Rye, NH, Janis Hancock of Portsmouth, NH, and several nieces, nephews and great nieces and nephews.

There will be no services at her request. Suggested in-kind contributions:

performing random acts of kindness, and/or cleaning up trash on beaches or roadsides. Monetary donations may be made to Cornerstone VNA, Crossroads House, Gather, Pope Memorial Humane Society of Cocheco Valley, or the Jean E. and Joseph G. Sawtelle Scholarship Fund at New Hampshire Charitable Foundation.

Tribute Wall

SJ

“ She came into the store where I work three days a week. She seemed quiet and a little shy. Whenever I saw her, I'd always acknowledge her by saying, 'Its so nice to see you and she'd reply, "it's nice to see you too" we'd chat briefly. Then she'd walk quietly away and disappear into one of the Isles. I'd stand still for a few minutes after speaking with her. There was something about her that left me feeling glad that we talked, though briefly. I'll miss her quiet presence.
Rest in peace Caryl.
Sharon

Sharon Jones Jenkins - January 11 at 10:26 PM

KF

Caryl and I were roommates in Paris when we were College age. She was warm and funny and we were always laughing together we were pen pals for ages and I Itreasured our bicoastal friendship.

karen finch - January 26 at 08:44 PM

KM

Caryl and I were friends when we were younger ,we drifted away from each other in the 80s as I married and had children ,my last memory of us together was in 86 ,on the beach in Nh ,with my 3 children . We spoke after she had her daughter Sarah as I also had a daughter I named Sarah. I have started spending more time in Nh ,the last few years and hoped we could re connect ,I was looking as old pictures of us last week. I am so sad to read of her passing.

Karen J McNally - April 09 at 04:41 PM

SS

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Sarah Sawtelle - January 08 at 02:21 PM

SW

Love this. I remember the Easter egg hunts.

Sherry Wood - January 16 at 03:09 PM

KM

“ We LOVED you so.....

Sully and Kathleen

kms - January 07 at 08:15 PM

SS

“ 21 files added to the album Tribute Wall



Sarah Sawtelle - January 07 at 04:41 PM