



Kathleen Murphy

March 15, 2006

Kathleen Patricia Murphy died Wednesday, March 15, 2006, at home in Fort Collins after a two-year battle with colon cancer. She was 59. It was through her work as a librarian that Kathy was best known in the community outside of her friends and family. She joined the staff of the Fort Collins Public Library in 1978 as a clerk and was promoted to adult services librarian a year later because of her skills working with information and people. In 1983, Kathy became director of the Windsor-Severance Library District where she built a cohesive, patron-oriented staff and introduced many systematic improvements. By far her greatest achievement, though, was planning and overseeing the construction of the new library building on Third Street in Windsor. Opened in 1997, the 13,300 square-foot facility - more than four times the size of the older building - has been a great asset for the area's growing population. Kathy was loved and admired by her family and her many friends and colleagues. She was a warm and generous person with a can-do attitude and an irreverent sense of humor. Even during her long illness, her infectious smile and laugh could light up a room. A good friend and colleague, a wonderful wife, mother, sister, and aunt and a world-class grandma, Kathy will be greatly missed by all of us. We should take comfort though, in knowing she died peacefully, secure in the knowledge that she was much loved and that she had led a full life. Importantly, that life included seeing the Boston Red Sox defeat the New York Yankees in the 2004 American League Championship Series and go on to win their first World Series in 86 years!

Kathy came by her love of the Red Sox naturally, since she was born in Brockton, Mass., to Daniel and Bronie Kelley on Jan. 23, 1947. The third of five children, she grew up in Dedham, Mass., and graduated from Dedham High School in 1964. She went on to the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, graduating with a bachelor's degree in English literature in 1968. While at U. Mass., Kathy met her husband, Vincent G. Murphy. The couple married on Feb. 3, 1968, and had their first and only child, Christopher A. Murphy on March 4, 1969. Before moving to Fort Collins in 1977, the family lived in New Orleans, Columbia, Mo., and Ames, Iowa. During their years in Columbia, Kathy attended the University of Missouri and earned a master's degree in library science in 1975. Kathy retired from the Windsor-Severance Library District in 1999. She remained very active in retirement, hiking with friends, participating in several book clubs, traveling extensively with her husband and spoiling her grandchildren, Helen, 7, and Rowan, 4. Kathy and Vince were especially fond of the many cycling trips they took in Europe. They also greatly enjoyed local theater productions and Ram sports. Kathy is survived by her husband, Vince, of Fort Collins; her son, Christopher and wife, Amy, and grandchildren, Helen and Rowan, all of Madison, Wis. She is also survived by her sister, Sheila Hewitt and husband, John, of West Bath, Maine; brothers, Daniel Kelley and wife, Myla, of Hingham, Mass., Tim Kelley and wife, Joline, of Plymouth, Mass., and Dennis Kelley and wife, Annemarie, of Westwood, Mass.; and 14 nieces and nephews. A celebration of Kathy's life will be at 2 p.m. Wednesday at Bohlender Funeral Chapel. Burial of cremated remains will be held during a private ceremony at Grandview Cemetery in Fort Collins. In lieu of flowers, the family requests memorial contributions be made to the Windsor Library Building Fund or Hospice of Larimer County in care of Bohlender Funeral Chapel, 121 W. Olive St., Fort Collins, CO 80524.