



## Carol S. Gralia

January 1, 1945 - November 23, 2017

Carol Suzanne (Safford) Gralia of Columbia, MD, died on Thursday, November 23, 2017, at a friend's home in Ellicott City, MD, after her two year battle with cancer. Carol was born in Indianapolis, Indiana, on January 1, 1945, to Merle C. and Wilma J. (Armstrong) Safford. She married Mars J. Gralia on July 6, 1968. She graduated from Arsenal Technical High School, Indianapolis, Indiana, in 1962. She went on to earn her Bachelor's degree in Zoology from Butler University and her Master's degree in Physical Education from Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri. Carol was always active in sports, whether she was teaching, coaching, officiating, helping with their children's sports, participating, reporting on sports or watching them. During her life, she enjoyed basketball, volleyball, fencing, racquetball, softball, running, bowling, and yoga. She and Mars participated in various Cycle Across Maryland events, and they also did bicycle rides across several other states. Even walking in the Columbia Volksmarch Club non-competitive outdoor fitness events was something that they both did numerous times between 1970 and 2017. She attended the Olympics twice during her life. Once was the summer games in Atlanta and the other was the winter games in Salt Lake City. Carol also served for 15 years as a leader of the Hare Raisers 4-H Club, even continuing with it for a few years after her children had aged out of the program. Carol's interest in sports led her to work 35 years as a sports reporter and later as an editor for the Columbia Flier and the Howard County Times newspapers. In recognition of her contributions, Carol was

inducted into both the Howard County Women's Athletics Hall of Fame in 2000 and also the Howard County Community Sports Hall of Fame in 2013. She covered both recreational sports and school sports and helped promote awareness of the various sports opportunities in the community. Carol is remembered as an advocate for equality in sports and sports journalism for both girls and boys. Following Carol's retirement from the newspapers in 2012, she became a certified yoga instructor. While she claimed she was not a yoga teacher, she was a very active assistant in the Yoga Center of Columbia, helping teachers with classes and also working at the desk and writing and editing Facebook posts for them. When Carol was not busy with sports, she created stained glass items as gifts for friends and family and she made special quilts for them as they welcomed new children or grandchildren into their families. Even as she battled cancer, Carol maintained her sense of humor and showed that she was truly a fighter. She will be remembered for both of these characteristics in addition to her friendly, thoughtful, kind and caring demeanor. She attended Bethany United Methodist Church. Carol is survived by her husband of 49 years, Mars J. Gralia (Columbia, MD) who helped provide loving care to her during her final days. She is also survived by their three children, Megan Pulfer (Noblesville, IN), Alex Gralia (Pittsburgh, PA), and Reed Gralia (Marriottsville, MD) and three grandchildren, Ella Pulfer, Dominic Gralia, and Quintin Gralia. Carol was the oldest of five girls. Her four sisters are Karen Wolf (Kokomo, IN), Marian Foster (Pasadena, CA), Merle Jean Illg (Brownsburg, IN), and Jamie Scott (Indianapolis, IN). A celebration of Carol's life will be held sometime in 2018.

# Tribute Wall



“ *Carol S. Gralia*

---

**Funeral Home Owner** - December 12, 2019 at 11:23 AM