



Patricia Mary McCarthy Gray

November 15, 1945 - May 25, 2025

Patricia Mary McCarthy Gray, of Avalon, NJ, a fiercely independent spirit with a sharp wit and a deep love for animals, passed away on May 25, 2025, at the age of 79.

Born on November 15, 1945, to John and Mary McCarthy, Patricia's early years were filled with adventure as an Air Force brat, traveling the world and developing a curiosity that would stay with her for life. She began college as a history major—her passion for American history, especially the Civil War and the Titanic, never waned—but she left to pursue a glamorous career as a flight attendant for TWA Airlines, flying the skies during the golden era of air travel.

During college, she spent a semester studying in Mexico—a formative experience that likely sparked her lifelong love of margaritas. In 1969, she married Robert Gray and later became a devoted mother to her daughter, Karen Patricia. Patricia, her mother, and her daughter all eventually settled in Avalon, New Jersey, where Patricia lived for over 40 years.

Her professional life was as dynamic as her personality: she worked for the Borough of Avalon tax office, trained as a blackjack dealer for the casinos, earned her real estate license, and took on various retail roles before retiring.

Patricia was an unapologetic spitfire—funny, sarcastic, opinionated, and

fiercely loving. She had a bold sense of humor and a taste for the unexpected. She loved a good steak and never missed an opportunity to gross out her son-in-law by snacking on raw hamburger meat just to get a reaction.

She adored animals of all kinds; her deep affection for animals was a defining feature of her life and treated every pet like a beloved family member. She also proudly owned and cared for 4 horses throughout her lifetime, her bond with them reflecting her strong, spirited nature.

Her favorite flower was the lilac, and her favorite color was yellow—bright, cheerful, and full of life, just like she was. She loved the beach, especially in the peaceful off-season, where she could spend time with family and soak in the serenity.

In 2004, she proudly became a grandmother to Ava and later to Alex. She relished the role although she wasn't the cookie-baking, sweater-knitting type of grandma—instead, she was the one you could talk to about real-life stuff. She and Ava, especially, shared countless chats about the world, relationships, and everything in between.

Patricia is survived by her daughter, Karen Patricia (Gray) Miller, son-in-law David Miller, granddaughter Ava Patricia Miller, grandson Alexander Kenneth Miller, cousins Terence and Kathleen O'Neill, and many other dear cousins and extended family members.

A celebration of Patricia's life will be held in October, hosted by her daughter and son-in-law, in the place she loved most—Avalon.