

# Obituary

## for Linda R. Waggener

**Date of Death: September 12, 2020**

Linda Rae Waggener, of Laramie, died September 12, 2020, following a long journey with cancer. She was 55.

Waggener was a fifth-generation native of Green River. She was born on July 7, 1965, to Eleanor (Ellie) and Richard Waggener, and graduated from Green River High School in 1983.

While growing up in Green River, Waggener was installed as honored queen for Bethel #48 in International Order of Job's Daughters. She participated in 4-H, and was an active member of St. John's Episcopal Church, serving as an acolyte and crucifer, participating in youth group, singing in the choir and selling tickets for the popular Shrove Tuesday pancake supper.

During high school, she was active in FHA, serving as president her senior year. She was a member of the Green River High School band, playing clarinet all four years. During her senior year, she sang in the choir and played bass piano in the jazz choir.

A passion for libraries, books and reading followed Waggener throughout her life, starting with summer reading programs at the Sweetwater County Carnegie library in Green River. She knew by seventh grade that she was going to pursue a professional career in library and information science. During her junior and senior years in high school, she worked as a library page at the Sweetwater County Library.

She earned an associate's degree from Western Wyoming Community College in 1985, a bachelor's degree in elementary education (along with a minor in library science) from the University of Wyoming in 1988, and a master's degree in library and information science from Simmons College in 1991.

While being treated in 2019 for late-stage cancer, Waggener earned a master's degree in American studies at UW. Her Plan B paper focused on Wyoming's Carnegie libraries and their importance in the public sector. She also completed a document titled *Wyoming Carnegie Libraries Subject Guide: Sources of Information Relating to the State's 16 Carnegie Libraries*.

The Subject Guide is posted online, and can be found easily by doing an Internet search using the publication title and author's name.

Waggener gifted her Plan B paper, Subject Guide, and research materials relating to her Wyoming Carnegie project to the UW American Heritage Center, and those materials will be available to the public by summer 2021.

After graduating from Simmons College, Waggener worked for four years at the Natrona County Public Library in Casper, serving as a reference/earth sciences librarian and a children's collection development specialist.

She then spent 11 years with the Fort Worth (Texas) Public Library system, working in a variety of positions including senior librarian, acting branch manager and acting assistant manager.

In 2006, she moved back to Wyoming after accepting a job at UW as library assistant senior with University Libraries.

During her time in Laramie, she sang alto in the choir of St. Matthew's Cathedral, and continued enjoying four of her passions in life—reading, listening to music, and watching Wyoming Cowgirl basketball and Cowboy football games, sitting in the same seats in War Memorial Stadium that her father acquired in the 1950s.

Among her many library- and history-related professional affiliations, she was an active member of the American Library Association throughout her professional career.

For those who knew Waggener closely, they enjoyed her quiet sense of humor. Asked about her favorite birthday, she smiled, "July 7, 1977, especially when the temperature hit 77 degrees. Talk about Lucky Sevens."

Waggener maintained her humor—along with strength, pride and being an inspiration to others—throughout her journey with cancer, first in 2015 when she was diagnosed with stage one ovarian cancer, and then in 2019 when she was diagnosed with stage four neuroendocrine small-cell carcinoma, a rare, fast-growing, aggressive cancer.

In May 2020, she learned that the neuroendocrine cancer had metastasized to her brain, and that there was no cure. Despite facing many obstacles, she kept a positive attitude.

Waggener was preceded in death by her father, Richard Waggener. She is survived by her mother, Eleanor Waggener, of Laramie; brother Larz Waggener, of Colorado Springs, Colorado; brother and sister-in-law, Robert and Leslie Waggener, of Laramie; and brother and sister-in-law, John and Diana Waggener, of Laramie.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, a private memorial service will be held at St. Matthew's Cathedral in Laramie, followed by burial in Riverview Cemetery in Green River. Montgomery-Stryker Funeral Home in Laramie is in charge of arrangements.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in Waggener's name to your local library or to the Meredith and Jeannie Ray Cancer Center, c/o the Iverson Memorial Hospital Foundation.

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