

Nancy Ellen Maher Waits by Bill Waits, husband

Thank you for allowing me to say a few words in remembrance of my wife, **Nancy Ellen Maher Waits**. She deeply loved Vassar and had planned on our being here from the moment that the reunion was announced. She greatly anticipated seeing you again.

After her enriching years here, she earned a Masters in history at Rutgers and a J.D. degree from Penn. I note, with some chagrin, that we took the LSAT at the same time and you are looking at the person who had the second best score.

She had a successful career as a computer security analyst with several large companies. She was on Jeopardy and flustered Alex Trebek somewhat when he remarked on her having won the “Better Crocker Homemaker of Tomorrow” award in high school and she replied that she hoped “tomorrow would never come.” She loved her career.

She was a constant source of keen insights and strong opinions. Let me share with you a few of the lighter guidelines for life that she voiced, very much on the spur of the moment. Years ago, when I became obviously frustrated at my first transition to new computer software, she counseled me to “not become emotionally attached to computer software or computer hardware.” Sound advice to be sure. I remember it whenever I buy new software.

When I asked for guidance about how frequently I should back up my work on the computer, rather than give me a simplistic moral injunction, she provided precise guidance: “It all depends on how much you would dislike redoing what you have done since the last backup.” Her comments had more impact than an injunction and I began to backup more frequently.

There was even a rule for glass doors. When I pulled on a door unsuccessfully, she pointed to the decal visible on the other side of the glass and reminded me that “Llup on a glass door means push”. Doubtless her foreign language skills were in play here. The rule has never failed me since.

Obviously, I have mentioned some lighter rules but, I assure you that there were profound rules as well. It was a true privilege to share 24 plus years with her, the love of my life. I, and her children, Valerie and Martin, miss her greatly.