



## Patricia Peroni

December 22, 1956 - December 24, 2019

Davidson- Patricia Ann Peroni – beloved professor and mentor, avid cyclist and hiker, enthusiastic kayaker, skilled knitter, and great friend to many died on December 24, 2019, of lung cancer.

Pat was born on December 22, 1956, in Saranac Lake, NY to George and Frances Peroni. Both her parents were WWII veterans and taught at Paul Smith's College in Saranac Lake in forestry and culinary arts respectively. Pat earned her BA in biology summa cum laude from SUNY Plattsburgh and a MLS from SUNY Albany. During her first job as a librarian at Bucknell University, she earned an MS in biology and then went on to earn a Ph.D. in botany from Duke University. After a year at UNC Greensboro, she began teaching in the Biology Department at Davidson College in 1992, where she developed many courses in ecology, biostatistics, plant biology, environmental science, and introductory biology. Students especially loved her Dendrology course because it involved extensive field work opportunities to learn from trees. She was also instrumental in developing and supporting Davidson's Environmental Studies program.

Dr. Peroni's research program focused on seeds and plants. She published studies on the wildflower white campion, honeysuckle, maple trees, and ants. Getting out into the woods to see the dynamics of the natural world delighted her. She enthusiastically passed on her great appreciation for plants to her many students, colleagues, and friends.

Pat particularly loved just being outdoors. She became a proficient kayaker and was an avid hiker and cyclist. She also kept a home in Galax, Virginia, so she could spend more time in the mountains. She enjoyed creative craft projects and often visited the Chestnut Creek School of the Arts where she volunteered. Dozens of babies in and beyond Davidson have been warmed by her botanically accurate knitted hats resembling grapes, berries, lemons, tomatoes and more (complete with stems and leaves).

Pat's civic service focused on the Davidson Lands Conservancy, where she served two terms as a board member and mentored survey projects to identify and catalogue local

plants. She also willingly took on more mundane tasks involving the annual Run for the Green to support DLC's work.

Pat was predeceased by her parents and her older brother, Paul, who died at age five, and two much loved dogs, Hobo and Zoe. She is survived by her dear brother Luke, his wife Jules, their children Colter and Whitney, as well as Pat's adored pets, Palma and Jesse.

Many will recall Pat as funny, innately generous, smart, witty, and forgiving. Her laugh brightened our days. Her courage and clarity of purpose at the end of her life is an inspiration to the many friends who banded together to help her navigate her final months.

She is deeply mourned by family, colleagues, students, and friends.

A celebration of life will be held March 21st from 2-4 pm at the Davidson College Lakeside Campus (152 Lake Campus Drive, Mooresville, NC 28117). A 10-minute drive from Davidson, the event will be outside on Lake Norman. There will be a tent in the case of poor weather.

A memorial fund has been established at Davidson College in memory of Pat. The money raised will go to support either funding of a state of the art Greenhouse for the Botany Department in memory of Pat (who had been working on the funding of this project for years), or go to fund female undergrad research scholarships. The determining factor will be funding from the College.

Donations can be sent to Davidson College, Box 7170, Davidson, NC 28036. Donors are asked to include a note indicating the gift is in honor of Pat. Or donations can be made online at [www.davidson.edu/makeagift](http://www.davidson.edu/makeagift) and there is a space to enter the gift is to honor Pat.

James Funeral Home of Huntersville is serving the family.

# Events

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**MAR**   **Celebration of Life**   02:00PM - 04:00PM

**21**

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Davidson College Lakeside Campus

152 Lake Campus Drive, Mooresville, NC, US, 28117

# Comments

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“ Pat was always a joy to meet on campus or on Davidson-Concord Road. She lived life to the fullest. I'll miss her.

**Brenda Flanagan** - January 06, 2020 at 12:28 PM

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“ I am so sorry to learn of Pat's passing. So many memories growing up in Paul Smiths with the wonderful Peroni family. Sending our thoughts to Luke and family and all of those obviously touched by Pat during her amazing life.  
Cindy (Samburgh) LaMay

**cindy lamay** - January 04, 2020 at 09:15 AM

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“ I was shocked and saddened to read of Pat's passing in our local newspaper. While we went to the same elementary schools and high school together, we always traveled on very different paths. I am so impressed -although not surprised- to read of all her educational and professional accomplishments. It is also clear from reading her obituary that she led a very full and rich life and was much loved by many. My sympathy to you, Luke and your family, and to Pat's many dear friends, colleagues, and students.  
Sincerely,  
Nanette (Gokey) Winter

**Nanette Winter** - January 03, 2020 at 04:11 PM

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“ Pat was always one of my favorite people at Davidson College and I considered myself lucky if I had the good luck of running into her on campus. She often would be walking her dog and always had a kind word to share. I appreciated her letting me stay in her home for a few days when I needed to be close to campus to help run a conference that our department was hosting. And, I enjoyed sharing some Lenten roses with her from our yard. I remember her coming over after a soaking rain (when digging was easier), and helping her select some varieties that would work well in her wonderful yard in Davidson. She was a gentle soul and I will miss her.

**Lisa Smith** - January 02, 2020 at 09:08 AM