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## The Weight of the World

Marie was a compassionate, outgoing person who loved the beaches of North Wildwood, traveling, exploring, and helping those in need. Before her diagnosis, Marie experienced exhaustion for around a year. When Marie turned 50, her doctor urged her to schedule a routine colonoscopy. The procedure turned up devastating results. In March of 2020, Marie was diagnosed with colon cancer.

As soon as Marie received her diagnosis, her husband Pat turned to Guardian Nurses for help. "It took the weight of the world off my shoulders to know that Guardian Nurses was there," he said.

Throughout Marie's battle with cancer, the family had three Guardian Nurses there to help: Colleen, Lauren, and Alicia. "Each nurse we had devoted the same level of concern and care. From getting appointments, to making sure my wife had everything she needed, making sure me and my kids were okay, doing house visits, anything you can think of," said Pat. "It was above and beyond the normal call of duty."

Due to the timing of Marie's diagnosis, the family faced obstacles due to Covid-19 restrictions. "It was challenging for me because that first year of appointments, my wife was all alone. I was on a phone call and so was the nurse from Guardian Nurses. I was in a state of shock, I could hardly remember what was being said," described Pat. "We didn't know what questions to ask, I didn't know what notes to be taking. To know the nurse was there and taking notes, it was so reassuring," he added.

At the beginning of Marie's medical journey, she and Pat found themselves unhappy with the initial treatment options offered by the first hospital. So, the Guardian Nurses went to work. "They helped us get an appointment at the University of Pennsylvania Hospital and made getting a second opinion possible. We were much happier with this course of action for Marie's condition," said Pat.

Sadly, on May 19, 2023, Marie passed away after her relentless fight with cancer. Pat remembers his wife as a selfless individual who raised their boys to always care for others. He said that the Guardian Nurses provided that same type of selfless care to Marie, always ensuring that she received the care and attention she deserved.

Pat was so pleased with the work the Guardian Nurses provided, he continues to use the program to better care for himself. "I use Guardian Nurses for my cardiologist, my neurologist, and my regular doctor visits," he said. "I would encourage anybody to contact them, even if it's not a major diagnosis, they really help manage your care. I wish they were available for everybody in this country."