Emily Susan Ferber Sondheimer

July 23, 2025

Emily Susan Ferber Sondheimer, 78, of Avon, Connecticut, passed away peacefully on July 23, after a brief but courageous battle with pancreatic cancer.

Born to Rhoda Goldman Ferber and Isidor Ferber on July 6, 1947, in Brooklyn, New York, Emily grew up in Lynbrook, New York, graduated from Valley Stream South High School, and earned her degree in Biology from Carnegie Mellon University, where she met the love of her life, Norman Sondheimer. They married in 1969 and continued their education at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, where Emily earned her Master's degree in Nutritional Science. Their daughter, Jessica Ann, was born there, and their son, Jonathan Gary, in Columbus, Ohio. The Sondheimer family made homes in Pennsylvania, California, and New York before Emily and Norman settled in Avon, Connecticut, in 1998.

Emily's professional and personal life reflected her curiosity, creativity, and care for others. She worked in airline catering, managed feeding programs for the Los Angeles School District, and built a thriving business as a personal chef. She also used her skills to serve her community such as as co-director of As You Like It Catering at Congregation Agudath Achim in Niskayuna, New York and as a volunteer at Gather 55, a mission-driven restaurant supporting Hands On Hartford.

A gifted artist in many forms, Emily was also an accomplished potter whose beautiful works continue to grace homes across the country.

Above all, Emily was a devoted wife, mother, grandmother, sister, aunt, and friend. She was the calm center of her family, a reliable and loving presence who brought people together over meals and for holidays, creating a lifetime of cherished memories.

Emily is survived by her husband of 56 years, Norman Sondheimer; her daughter, Jessica Ann; her son, Jonathan Gary, and his wife, Shiri; her treasured grandchildren, Isidor and Ryu; her sister Julie, brothers Norman and Bobby and numerous other family members. She will be deeply missed, but as she often told her children, “Don’t worry, I will be around watching you.”

The family extends heartfelt gratitude to the Oncology staff at UConn’s John Dempsey Hospital, whose exceptional care and compassion sustained Emily and those who loved her in her final days.

A private family funeral will be held. An open celebration of Emily’s life is scheduled for Tuesday, July 29, at 5:00 PM at Gather 55, 55 Bartholomew Ave, Hartford, CT 06106.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Emily’s memory to Hands On Hartford or to your local feeding program. Those who are able are also encouraged to consider donating platelets as their availability was crucial to her treatment.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

JUL **29**. 5:00 PM (ET)

Gather 55
55 Bartholomew Ave
Hartford, CT 06106