



Kathryn "Kay" Laird

December 15, 1938 - May 30, 2018

Kathryn Elizabeth McBurney Laird, 79, Topeka, Kansas, died Wednesday, May 30, 2018.

Kay was born December 15, 1938, in Caney, Kansas, the daughter of William Knapp McBurney and Dorothy Ashby Norfleet McBurney. She graduated from Caney High School in 1956 and Coffeyville Community College in 1958. In 1960, she earned a Bachelor of Science in Education from Kansas State Teachers College-Emporia where she was a member of Tri Sigma Sorority and where she earned her Master's degree in 1969.

She began her career teaching English at Jardine Middle School in Topeka, Kansas and soon after taught French at Topeka West High School and then Topeka High School. Kay was a French teacher par excellence escorting the French Club to Europe every other year.

On June 14, 1972, Kay and Donald Leroy Laird, Jr. were united in marriage at Most Pure Heart of Mary Church, Topeka enjoying more than 42 years together before his death on October 14, 2014.

Kay was a member of Sacred Heart-St. Joseph Parish and a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution for over 50 years.

Survivors include her sister, Diana Van Winkle, Coffeyville KS; brother, John McBurney (Judy), Liberty MO; nieces and nephews; brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law. Kay was also preceded in death by her parents, brother-in-law, Les VanWinkle and great-grand-nephew, Gordon Motl.

Family will greet friends from 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. Tuesday at St. Joseph Church, 227 SW Van Buren, Topeka KS 66603, where a rosary will be prayed at 5:30.

Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 10 a.m. Wednesday at the Church. Burial will follow at Mount Calvary Cemetery.

Memorial contributions are suggested to St. Joseph Church Building Fund or to the Topeka High School French Club, sent in care of Kevin Brennan Family Funeral Home, 2801 SW Urish Road, Topeka KS 66614.

Cemetery Details

Mount Calvary Cemetery

801 SW Westchester Rd
Topeka, KS 66606

Previous Events

Visitation

JUN 5. 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM (CT)

St. Joseph Catholic Church
227 SW Van Buren Street
Topeka, KS 66603

Rosary

JUN 5. 5:30 PM (CT)

St. Joseph Catholic Church
227 SW Van Buren Street
Topeka, KS 66603

Mass of Christian Burial

JUN 6. 10:00 AM (CT)

St. Joseph Catholic Church
227 SW Van Buren Street
Topeka, KS 66603

Tribute Wall



“ Kevin Brennan Family Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Kathryn "Kay" Laird



Kevin Brennan Family Funeral Home - June 01, 2018 at 11:53 AM



“ I have so many memories of Madame Laird. She made the French language come alive. I will always cherish the memories of her class and her laugh! The singing nuns record that she played!! She was absolutely wonderful.

mary holzhausen - October 01, 2023 at 11:01 PM



“ Kathryn "Kay" Laird

January 28, 2023 at 12:08 PM

TG

“ I want to give a big shout out to the best French teacher I ever had in all my years of French, Madame Laird from Topeka! She was awesome and taught me so much, she even hosted the seniors at her house for a French dinner. Her lesson plans were logical and she did a lot of French culture, too. She welcomed me to Topeka High as a new student from Seattle. I believe she retired and my class was her last, in 1999. She was awesome. Au Revoir Mme. Laird. She taught students for so many years.

Tyler Graf - January 25, 2019 at 04:54 PM

RD

“ Madame Laird was one of my favorite teachers at THS and I have thought of her often in the nearly 30 years since. She and Mr. Laird were warm, gracious and fun. I'm very sorry for your loss. - Rae Anne (Leiker) Davis

Rae Anne Davis - June 06, 2018 at 02:05 PM

JS

“ I didn't take French or know Mrs. Laird during my time at Topeka High, but she moved into a house near my mom's house during her retirement years. I got to know her then. What a wonder. Amazing woman. I am sorry for her family's loss.
Jill Pfuetze Schmidt

Jill Pfuetze Schmidt - June 05, 2018 at 09:24 AM



“ I had the privilege of knowing Mrs. Laird through French class at Topeka High. She was a mentor to me. My family was touched by both her and Mr. Laird. When my father died in 2011, she came to the funeral and spoke with me after. Such a kind soul. May she rest in peace. Know that she touched the lives of many.
Ketti Dawson (Palubinski)

Ketti Dawson - June 05, 2018 at 09:06 AM

CB

“ My thoughts and prayers are with you, Kay's extended family. You've lost a kind and gentle soul, I knew Kay through the Topeka Alumnae group of Tri Sigma sorority. Kay, with Don's help in the kitchen, hosted many Founder's Day brunches, in their home. The Meals were delicious and served with style and love. All of us will miss her and always hold fond memories of her. *Chrystl Diffenderfer Brim*

Chrystal Brim - June 05, 2018 at 03:50 AM

MF

“ I had “Miss McBurney” at Boswell Jr High. I always enjoyed French class, and I was at the age where I wanted to be just like her, for she was pretty, had a darling figure, spoke French for Heaven's sakes, and owned a blue Mustang. None of those things materialized in my life! I have thought about her fondly through the years, wondering what path her life took. It sounds like she blessed many students in her career. With fervent prayers, *Mary (Marling) Franzen*

Mary (Marling) Franzen - June 04, 2018 at 12:34 AM



“ *Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Kathryn "Kay" Laird.*



June 03, 2018 at 07:07 PM



“ *To the Family of Madame Laird,*

Words cannot express what a wonderful lady and French teacher Madame Laird was. I was a student of hers at Highland Park High School (1976-1979). It is a blessing when as a student, at least one teacher has such complete faith in you. This can make or break a student. I received not only French lessons from her but life-long lessons in self-esteem and having confidence in myself and my capabilities. I am in tears as I write this because I have lost my favorite teacher of all time. She will now have to live in my heart as I remember all the great things she taught me.

Amicalement toujours,

Arzel (Angelique) Blackwell

Pamela Blackwell-Nwonye - June 01, 2018 at 01:10 PM



“ *Our condolences to Mrs. Laird's family. We remember seeing them occasionally at Assumption Church 7 am Mass and my husband Jerome taught @ Hayden with Mr. Laird before retiring. May she rest in peace!*



Marcia Pineda-Gutierrez - June 01, 2018 at 09:32 AM

LP

“*Madame Laird was a wonderful teacher who spent years teaching unruly adolescents. Even though I was one of the those kids, what bits of "langue française" I remember are thanks to her patience and endurance. Thank you, Madame Laird.*

Lori Phillips - June 01, 2018 at 08:49 AM