



Marilyn Cecelia McDowell

October 10, 1931 - March 1, 2014

Marilyn Cecelia Stockman McDowell passed away on February 6, 2014 at the age of 82. She was a resident at Reflection Living in Wichita, KS at the time of her death. She fought a valiant battle with Alzheimer's for years only to succumb to cancer in the end. Visitation at Kevin Brennan Family Funeral Home extends from 6:30 to 8:30 PM. There will be a Parish Rosary at 6:30 p.m. Marilyn's cremains will be present at the visitation. The Mass of Resurrection will be celebrated at 10:00 AM on Saturday, March 1, 2014 at Christ the King Catholic Church in Topeka, KS. Father Mitchell Zimmerman will be offering the Mass. Inurnment of Marilyn's ashes will follow at Mount Calvary Cemetery in Topeka, KS before a reception in the Parish Hall at Christ the King Catholic Church to conclude the celebration. Three sons, a daughter, five grandchildren and five great grandchildren survive Marilyn. Robb McDowell the oldest son is married to Kay Nusser McDowell. He is a Realtor with Coldwell Banker. They have two children living in Topeka - Robert Ray McDowell III and Kristi Cavitte. Kristi is married to Jerry Cavitte and they have two children Miles and Maci. Four family members (Kay, Robbie Kristi and Jerry) work in the public school system. Second son Rick married Diana Pfeifer McDowell. Rick is a Financial Analyst with Direct Energy in Tulsa, OK. Marilyn loved the joint trips with Diana and past classmate Dorran Thoreen. The three would travel with Rick to attend the annual Thrifty Car Rental Worldwide Conventions across North America. Diana and Rick have a daughter, Jessica, who is married to Jeremy Sonnett. They have three

children; Jonathan, Anna and Clare. Jessica's family lives in New Castle, PA. A third son, Ron, is married to Joann Blecha McDowell. Ron is an agent for Private Family Banking Partners. Rona and Joann served as caregivers for two years before Marilyn required full time assistance. They reside in Wichita, KS with their son Andrew. Becky McDowell moved home to care for her mother's loss of short-term memory necessitated a retirement from Meyers and Stauffer. Becky has a son, Chance who now lives in Iowa with Chance's father Mike Wessels. Marilyn's sister Nancy Crooks continues to maintain a residence in Springfield, MO with all her children, grandchildren and great grandson. Nancy's four children are Lori Highfill (married to Fred Highfill), Daniel Crooks, Jeanne Lindeman and Chris Crooks. Nancy's four grandchildren are Michael Highfill (married to Kristin), Michelle Highfill, Drew Lindeman and Ross Lindeman. Nancy's great grandchild is Caleb Highfill (son of Michael and Kristin Highfill). Marilyn was preceded in death by her parents, her sisters Eileen (at birth) and Peggy White, her brother USAF Col. William A. Stockman and brothers-in-law Orville Cook, Henry Crooks and Joe White. Marilyn was born October 10, 1931 at Schofield Barracks, an U.S. Army Post, Territory of Hawaii. She was the third daughter of M.Sgt. William Andrew "Stocky" Stockman and Eileen Marie Gibney Stockman, affectionately known as Pop-pops and Grandmere to their grandchildren. Marilyn wished to continue the usage of Grandmere, French for grandmother. However, Marilyn's grandkids shortened her moniker to first to Memere and then to Meme. From Hawaii, M.Sgt. Stockman was transferred to Ft. Logan, CO where Marilyn's youngest sister Nancy was born. Stocky was transferred to Fort Devens Army Air Field in Ayer/Shirley, MA then back again to Ft. Logan. His next duty station was Vancouver Barracks, Vancouver, WA. In May of 1941, M.Sgt. Stockman was transferred to Ft. Leonard Wood, MO. His family accompanied him on each of his moves. Because there were no family quarters on Ft. Leonard Wood the Stockman family members moved to Springfield, MO. While at Ft. Leonard Wood M.Sgt. Stockman was "appointed by direction of the President of the USA to the grade of Captain". From Ft.

Leonard Wood Captain Stockman went to England with the Hq 332nd Engineer Regiment where he was stationed with supplied equipment to the US troops engaged in the war with Germany. At his return stateside, he retired from the army with the rank of Major. The Stockman family remained residents of Springfield at his retirement. Marilyn attended and graduated from Springfield Senior High School (now Central High) in 1949. Annual class reunions allowed Marilyn the opportunity to rekindle lifelong friendships with other 49'ers Jean Routh Graham, Dorann Lewis Thoreen, Helen Kay Peterson Catt, Class President James Love, Class Historian Betty Brittain Harris and the events coordinator Betty Proctor Baker. Though they were not in the same graduating class, Rayma Burger and college beau Paul Mentis coordinated travels to coincide with her class reunions. Though Marilyn maintained a full academic schedule in high school she found time to join the Kilties, an all-girl parade corps known for their Scottish Tartan uniforms. Marilyn and seven other former Kilties regularly returned to see current corps of Kilties to perform at 49'ers class reunions. After graduating from high school, Marilyn enrolled at Southwest Missouri State College. The school eventually changed its name to Missouri State. Marilyn is listed in the 1952-53 Who 's Who Among Students in American Colleges and Universities. She served in the Athletic Department under Aldo Sebben, at a time when SMS won consecutive NAIA National Championships in 1952 and 1953. At the conclusion of one of the finals played the Municipal Auditorium in KC, the team finished with only four players on the floor. The excitement of victory sealed her lifelong passion for sports. Alpha Delta Pi, the oldest national sorority in the world, was installed at SMS in 1949. ADPi purchased a sorority house at 700 S. National Ave. Marilyn served as the Gamma MU's chapter Treasurer and won the Treble Club's Song Fest with her rendition of, "I Love Little Willie". She reigned at the 1953 Queen of Diamonds. ADPi is known for their use of the diamond pin. After graduating, she served as the Financial Advisor to the ADPi chapter at the University of Kansas and routinely attended

K-State sporting events with sorority sisters Jan Waide and Kathleen Ruediger. Marilyn graduated with honors on May 23, 1953 with a Bachelor of Arts in English and History and a minor in French. She was an Alpha Mu Gamma national honorary foreign language society member. Her French lessons stuck with her. As recent as two weeks ago while the nursing staff at Reflection Living was playing Trivial Pursuit, no one could the answer to the questions of how to say, "Goodbye" in French. From across the room Marilyn provided the answer much to the amazement of everyone present. Upon graduating from SMS, Marilyn moved to Grand Lake, CO to spend time with her Aunt Cecelia Gibney Lee at the Mountain West Bell Telephone Company. During this time, she met the man that she would marry. While on leave from the US Navy, Robert Ray McDowell paid a visit to his sister Colleen in Colorado. Marilyn asked Colleen, a co-worker at Mountain Bell, to set up a date. The rest is history. Marilyn followed Bob to the Naval Base San Diego during the Korean War. Her first born child, Robert Ray "Robb" was born in San Diego. After Bob's stint in the Navy concluded, the family relocated to Wichita where sons Rick and Ron were born. The fourth "R" (Rebecca nicknamed Becky) arrived in 1959 when the family moved to Hutchinson, KS. Her large Catholic family often took joint summer vacations to Table Rock Lake with another Holy Cross family, that of Bob and Carol Moritz. One favorite memory is a shopping trip to Iola Molded Plastic for placing an order for a custom-made IMP tri-hull for our water skiing vacations. Local Realtors, co-workers and family friends, Andy Bervert and Lou Ann Thoms ordered new boats at the same time. As Robb, Rick, Ron and Becky graduated from Topeka West high school, Marilyn joined the labor force in Topeka, KS. She started with the Kansas Medical Credit Union, moved on the Family and Children's Services, Security Benefit Life and retired from Meyers and Stauffer CPA. Her time was normally spent her evenings and weekends managing and repairing her single-family residential rental properties. Marilyn's former residence on Maupin Lane has the distinction of being third home constructed in the Westport Subdivision in southwest Topeka. Longtime neighbors, Barb

and Tom Severn, continue to spend time with Marilyn's youngest grandchild Chance Wessels whenever he returns to Tulsa. Next-door neighbors Howard (deceased) and Anita Davis co-adopted a cat that showed up one Halloween. The cat with two names eventually developed a weight problem with this shared care arrangement. Remax Sales Agent Bill Haag lived cater corner in one direction and Carolyn Decker in the other. Her family is deeply indebted to the neighbor across the street, Susie Sachs, who recognized the early symptoms of Dementia. Former neighbors Loretta and Bill Kastings provided Marilyn with her first job at the credit union when she reentered the workforce. Neighbors Vryle (now deceased) and Pat McKee shared time with Marilyn rooting for their sons at high school wrestling matches. Bill and Patsy Roberts, with three sons of their own - Blake, Greg and Chris - lived on the corner lot on the same street. Topeka West coaches Bill Allen and Mike Schwartz lived down the street and organized the Neighborhood Watch volunteers. Andy Bervert, co-owner of a real estate brokerage firm, lived around the corner. Mason Jim Stewart, a staunch KU fan, used to holler out the back door whenever KU played Mizzou or KSU. Marilyn supported her children's endeavors whole-heartedly. She was especially involved with her daughter's passion for horseracing. Together they purchased a mare. Becky would train horses in return for stud fees in hopes of breeding a champion. Shortly after winning the Florida Futurity, Becky suffered a near paralyzing accident as a jockey. The accident convinced her to move on to training horses in Iowa. To this day it is not unusual to see her arm in a sling or a cast. Marilyn enjoyed the annual treks to the Big 8 basketball tournaments in Kansas City's Kemper Arena with Robb, Rick, Diana and close family friends LaMonta Woerner and Ralph Anderson. The tradition began in mid-1970 and continued uninterrupted until the Big 8 conference merged with four Texas schools to form the Big 12. It was always a source of entertainment to see who the slowest eater between games was - Mom or her friend (now deceased) LaMonta. The wife of Marilyn's older brother, Erma Wilcox Stockman, formed a sisterhood of Stockman relatives. The association of 16 women is often referred to as the

Ya Ya's. Even at age 90, Erma, the matriarch of the sisterhood, continues to plan annual excursions for the group. Her newest recruit to the sisterhood is her great granddaughter 3-year old Caroline DiEleuterio, daughter of Rachel Stockman DiEleuteria and her husband John of Felton, DE. Erma shares time with her daughters Barbara June Duffin in Delaware and Beverly (with husband Richard Crawford) in Arlington, TX. Marilyn excelled as a homemaker. Her relatives would make fun of her for ironing bed sheets and taking the time to properly fold a fitted sheet. Her Stolen Apple Crumb Pie recipe captured the Blue Ribbon in one baking contest. Marilyn mowed her lawn by hand into her 60's. She spruced up the yard by lining the perimeter of her home with Jackson and Perkins Tropicana roses. Marilyn supported the Catholic Church teaching Catechism at Most Pure Heart in Church. Her years as a volunteer CCD teacher earned her the Pope St. Pius X award for meritorious service. She also joined the Civic Newcomers Club to welcome new residents to City of Topeka. Her hobbies included bowling at the now razed Southwest Bowl with her doubles partner Norma "Nono" Power and Championship Bridge with Joyce Gartner in the St. Francis Bridge Club. Memorial contributions are suggested to the Kiltie Drum & Bugle Corps, c/o Central High School, Attn: Jessica Freeman, 423 E. Central Street, Springfield MO, 65802, or Alzheimer's Foundation of America, 322 Eighth Avenue, 7th floor, New York, NY 10001, or Amedisys Hospice of Wichita, 250 W Douglas Suite 101, Wichita KS 67202.

Tribute Wall



“ *Marilyn Cecelia McDowell*

January 28, 2023 at 12:08 PM



“ *Wow.....this obituary is quite a tribute. Thank you, McDowell family for sharing these precious stories....*

Lori Meens - June 18, 2014 at 02:01 PM



“ *I worked closely with Marilyn at Security Benefit for a number of years. We were at opposite ends of the 2nd floor hallway. Marilyn had a great sense of humor and a big and caring heart for all. Her stories of transporting horses for Becky "only going forward" with a trailer were a delight to hear. She cared so much about all her children and grandchildren. She also gave me some very wise thoughts when my father passed away and times were very difficult. She said she and her sister had cared for their mother before her death, and after the death around holiday time someone shared the thought that "Your mother always loved holiday music and the bells.....think of how much more beautiful they now sound for her in heaven." That thought has comforted me in many losses. Perhaps it can comfort you also....she would want that for you.*

*With sincere sympathy,
Carol*

Carol DeGross Sook - March 01, 2014 at 07:14 PM

JT

“ I loved your mother! She was a good friend and an Alpha Delta Pi sister. We spent many trips together to KU to serve on the board. She played bridge in our group and was a wonderful and caring member. I have missed her so much. I regret I will not be able to attend the services, but I wanted to express my sympathy to all of her family. Our group is sending a contribution to Alpha Delta Pi in her honor. Jody Teeter

Jody Teeter - February 25, 2014 at 05:50 PM

JL

“ Although we had over 500 students in our graduating class, Marilyn was someone very special to me and many others. I will never forget the good times we shared, Marilyn as a member of the Kilties and me as the drum major of the marching band. We continued our friendship through the fellowship of class reunions. We will miss her this year, but she will remain in our memory as a treasured friend. I am very sorry I will not be able to attend the services, but our thoughts and prayers are with you.

James Love - February 24, 2014 at 10:25 PM

BE

“ To all the family of our friend and classmate, Marilyn, we are saddened by her passing I was looking forward to her coming to our reunion picnic this June where the Kilties will perform. When she would see them her eyes would brighten as if she was still one of them, and they were looking forward to seeing her as well. God Bless you children. You have taken such good of your mother. You will be blessed. She will be missed

BettyHarris - February 23, 2014 at 03:23 PM

JL

“ Rob, Rick, Ron & Becky and families, I have so many wonderful memories of your mom, she will always be in my heart. I remember being in the boat and Marilyn holding me and teaching me that song... Did you ever think... not the best song for this moment, but we laughed so much singing it then. She was also there with me when I was a sophomore in high school and my dear Grandmother passed away. Marilyn helped me get through that terrible time by encouraging me to write my favorite memories. She loved telling me that story about when she and my dad went to get supplies for the girl scouts. Living with Marilyn while I was a student teacher was the best as she taught me how to make the scotcheroos that we still love, and of course watching MU and KSU sports on tv. I am so grateful that I was able to spend some time with her a few years ago. She was a wonderful friend, and I am so thankful for knowing her. I am so sorry I won't be able to be with you next weekend, but you will all be in my thoughts and prayers.

Jenifer Moritz Lathrum - February 20, 2014 at 11:31 PM

CS

“ Sincere sympathy is extended to Marilyn's family upon learning of her death. Marilyn was always a caring, cheerful co-worker, willing to help, flashing a brilliant smile, and blessed with a terrific sense of humor. She was a pleasure to work with for a number of years at Security Benefit. Thoughts and prayers are with your family at this time.

Sincerely,
Security Benefit Retirees

Carol DeGroff Sook - February 15, 2014 at 02:04 PM

JP

“ Feb 13, 2014

To The Family of Marilyn McDowell,

I knew Marilyn through her son Rick. Rick and my son, Jeff Campbell were friends We would run into each other, when we were out shopping and always enjoyed visiting with her. She always was so friendly and it fun to hear about her family. I know you have many memories of her.

Please accept my deepest sympathy. Words say very little at a time like this, but knowing people care, maybe helps. I hope so.

Sincerely,

Jackie Campbell Petersen

Jackie Campbell Petersen - February 13, 2014 at 05:51 PM

PP

“ *Oh the precious memories I have of being with family members at Marilyn's house in Topeka. My thoughts and prayers go out to the family. I know that Marilyn will be missed by all who knew and loved her! She is no longer in pain or suffering and I hope that knowing that brings you peace. Love to you all, DonL and Patty*

Patty Collins Phipps - February 12, 2014 at 05:13 PM

SS

“ Remembering a lovely woman who was like a Grandmother to all the children on our block. Marilyn had the same birthday as Bob and they shared cards and would always give each other a birthday hug on that day even sometimes in the middle of the street. Lots of calls in the night to run down a loose horse, or help with feeding them in bad weather. Marilyn always had a great story to share, but she also had a great ear to listen. She had award winning roses and was the most independent woman we ever knew and was always resourceful. A very giving person. She has been missed in our neighborhood for a number of years now, but will always be remembered.

Susie & Bob Sachs - February 12, 2014 at 12:55 PM

BL

“ Robb, and all the family. I am so sorry about your Mother. Hold tight to all your memories. God Bless her and all your family during this time.

Becky Lindbloom - February 12, 2014 at 12:05 PM