



## Mary L. Nelson

May 6, 1928 - October 3, 2024

Mary Louise Day was born May 6, 1928, in Paxico, Kansas, the same year Mickey Mouse and Steam Boat Willy were created, and one year before the Great Depression hit America.

She lived the first 11 years of her life during the Great Depression as it ended in 1939, many believe this is what made her so resiliently strong and mentally tough. WWII began that same year in 1939 and ended in 1945 when she was 17.

During high school she was a drum majorette, choreograph swimmer, and basketball player. She was stunningly beautiful and loved to dance and socialize.

She married Claud E. Tidwell in 1946 and gave birth to a son, Claude E. "Skip" Tidwell, Jr. in May of 1947, both proceed her in death.

In 1955, during the beginning of racial tensions in the US, she married John M. McDonald who proceeds her in death. They had two sons, "Mick" McDonald and Steve A. McDonald who survive her.

During this time she worked for the Government at Forbes Air Force Base. Mary loved to ballroom dance, play cards especially, play bridge, and bowl,

she once threw a perfect game of 300. She enjoyed athletics, KU basketball, KC Chiefs football. She loved watching figure skating, gymnastics and especially golf.

She married Ken Nelson in 1962 and moved to California. Mary worked at Memorex and started nursing school in 1965, she divorced in 1967. While working at Memorex she took on a second job at Kiser Hospital in Santa Clara, CA and continued to put herself through nursing school until she graduated as an RN in 1968.

In 1972, she moved back to Kansas.

Once in Kansas, she worked at the VA Hospital and Stormont Vail Hospital as a registered nurse, working in the neo-natal, emergency, and critical care units. She worked for the next 25 years as a nurse and retired at age 69.

She enjoyed her friends and family members when they came around. She loved to tend to her flower garden, mow grass, work in the garage, piddle around the house, doing plumbing, roofing, sheet rocking, landscaping, painting, hanging wall paper, doing carpentry work, and any other thing to keep her busy. She loved her birds, squirrels and bunny rabbits. She also loved to travel going to Fiji, Australia, Paris, Alaska and the UK.

After retirement she wintered in Delray Beach, Florida where she was elected President of her Condo Association. She continued to get voted in as President and served in that capacity for 16 years, until she was 90 years old.

Mary is survived by sister, Loraine Hards, of Hercules, CA.; two of her sons; daughter-in-laws, Nancy McDonald and Barb Tidwell; 11 grandchildren; numerous great and great- great grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews.

She was surrounded by loved ones at the time of her passing.

Visitation will be Wednesday, October 9, 2024, at 10 a.m. at Kevin Brennan Family Funeral Home, 2801 SW Urish Road, Topeka KS 66614. Funeral service will be at 11 a.m. Burial will follow at Mount Calvary Cemetery.

Memorial Contributions may be made to Gentiva Hospice in care of the funeral home.

Condolences may be sent online at [www.kevinbrennanfamily.com](http://www.kevinbrennanfamily.com)

# Cemetery Details

## Mount Calvary Cemetery

801 SW Westchester Rd  
Topeka, KS 66606

# Previous Events

## Visitation

OCT 9. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Kevin Brennan Family Funeral Home  
2801 SW Urish Road  
Topeka, KS 66614  
(785) 272-7888  
[info@kevinbrennanfamily.com](mailto:info@kevinbrennanfamily.com)

## Funeral Service

OCT 9. 11:00 AM (CT)

Kevin Brennan Family Funeral Home  
2801 SW Urish Road  
Topeka, KS 66614  
(785) 272-7888  
[info@kevinbrennanfamily.com](mailto:info@kevinbrennanfamily.com)

# Tribute Wall



“ *Kevin Brennan Family Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Mary L. Nelson*



---

**Kevin Brennan Family Funeral Home** - October 09, 2024 at 09:26 AM



“ *To All Of Mary's Family, You Are In Mine And Randee's Thoughts And Prayers. Cherish The Memories.*

---

**Vicki Carreno** - October 07, 2024 at 11:58 AM



“ *Rest in Peace Mary*

---

**Lavon Vossen** - October 06, 2024 at 06:06 PM