



Mary Louise Wilburn

August 27, 1931 - December 20, 2020

Mary Louise Wilburn was born August 27, 1931 to Robert Lee and Mary Sue Zelsman in Amarillo, Texas. She was the youngest child and the only girl in her family. She had two older brothers, Bob Zelsman of Austin and the late Bill Zelsman of Amarillo.

Mary Louise attended Margaret Wills Elementary, Sam Houston Junior High, and Amarillo High School. She was a straight A student and a member of the National Honor Society in 9th – 12th grades. After graduating high school, Mary Louise attended Cottey Junior College in Nevada, Missouri, for one year. She went on to attend and graduate from Texas Christian University (TCU) in 1953 with a degree in Elementary Education. It was there that Mom met the love of her life, Gene Edward (Ed) Wilburn, and they were married October 12, 1953. Both of them were extremely proud to be TCU graduates. Over the years, they attended many TCU football games and alumni functions with friends they made in college.

Mary Louise was an active, on-the-go, relentlessly positive person. In all her 89 years, her children never heard her mutter an unkind word about anyone. She always looked on the bright side of every situation and saw the good in everyone. She was sweet and loving with a quick wit and great sense of humor. Mom loved to play tennis, fish, read mysteries, play the piano, sing, and sew. As a young mother, she made all her own clothes and her

daughter's clothes too. She enjoyed watching sports on TV and in person, especially football. Mom played catch with her son so much, she always said she helped him earn his football scholarship to Rice University. Mom wound up with bursitis in her shoulder, but said those were great times and well worth the pain.

Mary Louise was a Presbyterian her entire life, and she was extremely active in church—teaching Sunday School, singing in the choir, and leading the Women's Circle groups. She was a member of First Presbyterian Church in Amarillo, Saint Paul Presbyterian Church in Fort Worth, Central Presbyterian Church in Waco, and First Presbyterian Church in Pauls Valley. Although Dad was raised a Methodist, Mom informed Dad when they married, he would be a Presbyterian too from then on.

Among all the wonderful things she did, Mary Louise taught elementary school for many years, mainly fourth grade. She was very proud of her teaching career and considered teaching to be more of a ministry than a job. She received the ultimate compliment from many of her students. They told her and others that they became a teacher because of Mrs. Wilburn. Mom always believed education was a privilege and something to be cherished.

Through the years, Mom and Dad lived in Big Spring, Fort Worth, and Waco, Texas, Whittier and Cupertino, California, and Wynnewood, Oklahoma. Mom described herself as a "Texas Girl", but loved having the opportunity to move and live different places. It made her world bigger, she said many times.

Out of all the wonderful things in her life, Mom always said her greatest blessings and achievements were being married to Ed for almost 67 years, and having two children, Marcia Wilburn Penland and Robert Haskell Wilburn. Her grandchildren, Andrew, Gracie, and Cooper were the loves of her life. She considered her children's spouses--Pat Penland and Sara Wilburn--to be her

children as well.

Mom went from being a city girl to a rancher's wife and enjoying every minute of it. Mom and Dad had the most extraordinary marriage and they made everyone around them feel welcome and special. Mom was the glue in our family and the wind beneath our wings. Mom led by example. Her daughter always said her mom was her best friend. Mom believed in her family and supported everything we did. She was always proud of us and truly interested in what we said and did. She was our ultimate encourager and confidante. Mom saw the world as a place filled with wonderful possibilities and beauty.

Mary Louise passed from this earthly life on December 20, 2020. Mom and Dad are now together again, still encouraging, loving, and guiding us. Forever, they will be our inspiration. They exemplified and they taught us the values in life that matter most—putting faith and family first, and using integrity, honesty, and kindness in the things we do.

Graveside services will be held on Saturday December 26, 2020 at Oaklawn Cemetery in Wynnewood, OK officiated by Rev. Rick Baggett. Services are under the direction of DeArman Funeral Home of Wynnewood. Please send online condolences to www.dearmanfuneralhome.com

Cemetery Details

Oaklawn Cemetery

Wynnewood
Wynnewood, OK 73098

Events

Details are pending.

Tribute Wall



“ *Mary Louise Wilburn*

October 05, 2023 at 07:47 PM



“ *I loved when Mr and Mrs Wilbur would come into Walmart and shop. It would brighten my day. They were always together. Always had smiles are their faces.*

Libby Potts - December 24, 2020 at 09:22 PM