
Mary Lynn COLEMAN (1948 - 2019)

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Service Information

Celebration of Life

Saturday, Jun. 22, 2019

3:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Coleman family home

Obituary

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COLEMAN, Mary Lynn August 17, 1948 May 1, 2019 Mary Lynn Coleman, beloved wife, mother and grandmother passed away peacefully at home surrounded by family on May 1st, in Spokane, Washington at the age of 70. Mary Lynn is survived by her husband, Dr. William Coleman ("Bill"); her son Seth Coleman and his wife BriAnne Coleman ("Bri"); her son Benjamin Coleman ("Ben") and his wife Jasmina Coleman; and her grandchildren: Natalie Coleman, Sarah Coleman, Aiden Pjosek, Emilie Coleman, and Daniel Coleman. She is preceded in death by her parents Emery and Marguerite Wilson; and by Bill's parents, Frank and Virginia Coleman. Mary Lynn was born on August 17, 1948 in Ironton, Missouri. She graduated from Potosi High School in Potosi, Missouri in 1966. Following her high school graduation, she attended Central Methodist College and obtained her degree in teaching from the University of Missouri. Mary Lynn met the love of her life, Bill, in the Summer of 1962 while the two were attending a vocal music camp in Cape Girardeau, Missouri. They dated throughout high school and college and married on August 22, 1970 at Potosi's United Methodist Church. After marriage, the couple moved to St. Louis where Mary Lynn began a long and distinguished career in early childhood education while Bill attended Medical school at the Washington University School of Medicine. It was during this time that Mary Lynn received the first of her many accolades for teaching. She developed an early learning program that helped children learn about their 5 senses and their interaction with the world around them. The program was such a success that it caught the eye of the Rockefeller family and she was given a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation to further develop and continue her work. This also led to Mary Lynn's work being exhibited at the Smithsonian Museum in Washington DC as well as a national appearance on NPR. Following Bill's graduation from medical school, the Colemans moved to Boston for Bill to begin surgical residency at Massachusetts General Hospital. To help make ends meet, Mary Lynn worked as a banker, kept the home, and supported Bill. Over time, the couple welcomed Seth and Ben into their home and Mary Lynn set about preparing her sons for adulthood in the same loving way that she had previously, and would again, teach her pupils at

school. Seth and Ben remember her as a kind, giving and loving mother who encouraged them to pursue their goals and treat others with kindness and respect. Mary Lynn was a gifted, loving, and dedicated educator of children. She was a passionate defender of and advocate for children. She demonstrated this passion and dedication throughout her long and decorated career at Saint George's School. Scores of lucky children were educated and loved by her in the Coleman House, dedicated to Mary Lynn in recognition of her remarkable career in the Lower School. To this day, many of these now grown children reach out to the Colemans to acknowledge and thank the family for her positive influence on their lives. Mary Lynn's love and support of children was not limited to her role at Saint George's. When she wasn't at school, she volunteered with children's charities, sat on charitable boards focused on children's issues, and advocated for children to government. Mary Lynn loved her family deeply and it showed through her generosity to each of them. As Bill's wife, she worked with him, stood beside him and cherished him for 56 years. During these years together, Bill and Mary Lynn were seldom found apart, and that was by design and desire. Many people would say that you can't talk about Mary Lynn without Bill, and vice versa. Theirs was a truly beautiful love story treasured by their family and friends. Mary Lynn also took great pride in being Seth and Ben's mom. No Saint George's game was complete without the sight and sounds of Bill and Mary Lynn cheering the Dragons on from the bleachers. She cared and cuddled, rooted and cheered; but she also corrected, guided and taught. She loved "her boys" and they loved her right back. It should be no surprise that Mary Lynn's grandchildren really lucked out. As their "Gummy", Mary Lynn loved to take them shopping, out to eat, or to a movie. She spent countless hours with her grandchildren, singing and dancing, reading books, and playing on the floor with Legos or dolls. Mary Lynn showered her grandchildren with love and generosity. These kids treasured their Gummy and they miss her terribly. Mary Lynn's heart and home were always open and welcoming to all. This was especially true of Seth and Ben's friends. They were always welcome, and they knew it. Mary Lynn would load them into her Suburban for dinner at the Shogun or hand out sleeping bags at the end of another fun night at the Coleman home. Many of these friends have recently reached out to the family to say that Mary Lynn was like their "second mother." Mary Lynn was a woman of faith. She was a lifelong member of the United Methodist Church and attended services as often as her health allowed at Fowler United Methodist Church in the Garland District of Spokane. So, while she would appreciate and understand the grief of those feeling her loss, she would want us all to know that she is truly in a better place waiting to be reunited with us again. She would understand the tears but look forward to the smiles. Therefore, a Celebration of Mary Lynn's life is scheduled for June 22, 2019 at the Coleman family home from 3 to 6 PM. All are welcome to attend. In lieu of flowers, please send donations to the Vanessa Behan Crisis Nursery at 1004 E 8th Ave., Spokane, WA 99202; or, to Sally's House Foster Care, at 222 E Indiana Ave., Spokane, WA 99207. The family would like to thank Mary Lynn's wonderful care givers at Sacred Heart Medical Center and the loving nurses and staff of Hospice of Spokane; as well as all the friends who have reached out to support them in this difficult time.