



Mary Frances Griffiths

January 20, 1936 - August 14, 2022

Heaven's choir of angels received a beautiful soprano, Mary Frances Griffiths, Sunday, August 14th, 2022. Everyone she touched during her 86 years will miss her God-given gifts of music, hospitality, creativity and beauty.

Mary Frances was born in Kansas City, Missouri to Mary Owen McCord Zaner and Frank Zaner on January 20, 1936. When she was two, she and her mother moved to El Paso, Texas where she attended the Loretto Academy and Radford School for Girls before graduating from El Paso High School in 1954. It was at El Paso High School she met the love of her life, David Evan Griffiths. Mary Frances attended the University of Texas at Austin where she was an active member of the Alpha Chi Omega Sorority. David had earned an ROTC Scholarship to UTEP and joined the Sigma Alpha Epsilon Fraternity but transferred to UT Austin his sophomore year to keep an eye on his redheaded social butterfly and complete his Petroleum Engineering degree. Mary Frances, an accomplished soprano performing throughout high school and college, earned a Bachelor of Music with an emphasis in Music Education and Vocal Performance.

David and Mary Frances married following their Longhorn graduation in May of 1958 and moved to Great Falls, Montana to serve in the Air Force for two years. During their 64 years of marriage, Atlantic Richfield Oil Company (ARCO) would move them in Texas to Odessa, Corpus Christi, Midland and

Dallas. They were transferred to Anchorage, Alaska, back to Dallas and again to Midland where they retired. They moved to Tyler, Texas in 2010 to be closer to family.

Early in their marriage, Mary Frances was a professional soloist for churches and events as well as directed choirs, taught guitar and her specialty - piano lessons for younger children. Everywhere they lived, Mary Frances established her piano studio and quickly became a sought-after piano teacher. Her students were always winners in performance, guild and theory competitions. Mary Frances was a member and leader in Music Teacher Associations at the city, state and national level. In 1993, The Music Teachers National Association honored her as the first music teacher in Texas to be presented with its coveted Permanent Professional Certificate in Piano due to her outstanding teaching accomplishments and service to music education. In addition to teaching, Mary Frances continued singing and while in Alaska, performed as a soloist with the Anchorage Community Chorus.

Mary Frances loved music because she loved beauty. She was either admiring or creating beauty and always had a project in process. As Mrs. Griffiths, she would hand-make recital gifts for her students. She designed and decorated the several homes she and David built, as well as “yard of the month” landscaping they tirelessly tended. Her home was decked out for every holiday and her wrapping of presents was legendary. Gift-giving was one of her many love languages and she kept a gift closet and greeting card collection she shopped for year-round, ready to make someone’s day. She never forgot a birthday, anniversary or special occasion and her calendar was filled with reminders for her many friends and family. A dedication to being thoughtful and thinking of others fueled her passion, especially her parties.

Mary Frances was a consummate hostess and cook. Her tablescapes earned her accolades from the countless friends who dined at the Griffiths’ home, and

raved about her incredible meals. Whether a themed formal dinner, a bridge luncheon or poker night, Mary Frances loved to share her gift of hospitality on almost a weekly basis with friends and David's business colleagues. After retirement she cherished entertaining at their beloved Pagosa Springs, Colorado condo where they would summer. It was there she organized 4th of July parties for friends and Christmas celebrations for family. She and David loved the mountains, snow and especially fishing, and Mary Frances was as comfortable in jeans with a fishing pole as she was on the society page noted as one of the community's best dressed. She saw dressing as an art and never left the house without carefully tended hair, make-up and nails.

Mary Frances was an expert bridge player, enjoyed duplicate bridge with David and added bunko later in life to her social calendar. She was also an avid collector, up at dawn on weekends to garage sale for hidden treasures. After retiring from teaching, Mary Frances turned her successful antiquing hobby into her business, "Facets," at Midland's antique mall before her untimely brain aneurysm in 2003, which sent her to Midland Memorial Hospital where she had volunteered as a Pink Lady.

While she survived compromised, she retained a zest for life David so beautifully describes, "Although she endured several medical issues, including ovarian cancer and a brain aneurism, Mary Frances remained a vivacious energetic and loving person who maintained a positive attitude in her life and faith." That zest included a continued love for her family. "Mimi" was so proud of her grandchildren whom she called her "precious angels." When her children would visit, "Mom" would exclaim with pride, "That's my daughter!" or "That's my son!" And, she always had a humorous greeting for her son-in-law, George, whose invaluable help was a blessing. But, "Miff's" love for her husband, "Griff," was unmatched, and rightly so. David dedicated his life - the past 20 years, especially - to his wedding vows to care for his wife. His

inspirational dedication and devotion gave meaning to the words, “in sickness and in health,” and Mary Frances’ life was the richer for it. No wonder Mary Frances’ last words included, “I Love You,” to David, her faithful husband, whom she adored.

Mary Frances Griffiths was preceded in death by her mother, Mary Beaty; father, Frank Zaner; stepfathers Frank Scotten and Robert Beaty and her beloved Aunt and Uncle, Malcolm and Erma McCord Smith. Cherishing her memory is her devoted husband, David Evan Griffiths; daughter, Leslie Owen Griffiths Roberts and husband, George Travis Roberts, Jr. of Tyler, Texas; son, Jeffrey Thomas Griffiths and wife Jennifer Miller Griffiths of Frisco, Texas; grandchildren, Claire Frances Roberts and George Travis Roberts, III of Dallas, Texas and Grace Emilee Griffiths of Frisco, Texas; and cousins Elizabeth Ann Smith Whitelaw of Mesa, Arizona and Pat Yandell of Plano, Texas.

A Celebration of Life Service will be held Saturday, September 17, 2022 at 2:00 p.m. at Marvin United Methodist Church in Tyler, Texas. Memorials may be made to the charity of your choice or the Alzheimer’s Alliance of Smith County (www.alzalliance.org) where Mary Frances attended Day Club and whose help has been so appreciated by her family.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

SEP 17. 2:00 PM (CT)

Marvin United Methodist Church
300 West Erwin Street
Tyler, TX 75702
(903) 592-7396
<http://www.marvinumc.com>

Reception to follow

Tribute Wall



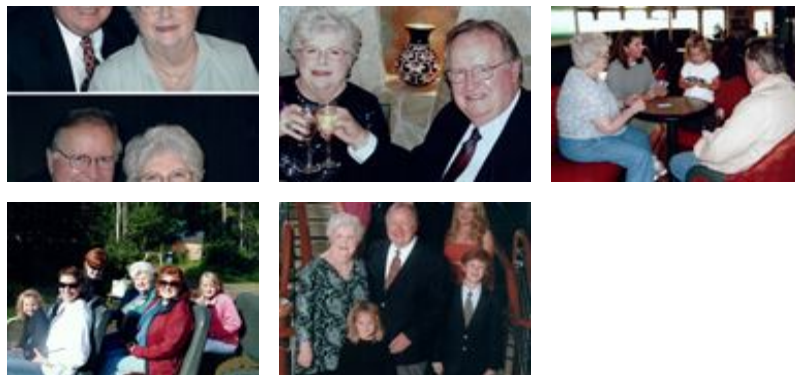
“ Stewart Family Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Mary Frances Griffiths



Stewart Family Funeral Home - September 15, 2022 at 10:35 AM



“ 103 files added to the album Life Tributes



Stewart Family Funeral Home - September 15, 2022 at 10:28 AM



“ Heartfelt condolences to my extended family on the passing of Mary Frances; Miffie, Mom, Mimi, & my life long “soul sister.” We were all blessed having her in our lives. We’ll see you on the other side.

Pat Hill-Yandell - August 16, 2022 at 10:54 PM

DT

Wish I had known her! She must have been such a force! Praying for your sweet Daddy, YOU, and your family.....so thankful she is whole and in paradise!

Diane Daniels Thomas - September 10, 2022 at 12:34 PM