



Eloise Lucile Kinney

April 16, 1957 - July 9, 2020

Eloise Kinney—mother, daughter, sister, wife, friend, lover of haiku, snickerdoodles and well-told tales—died on July 9 in Fort Collins, Co. She was 63. The sixth of 7 children of Dr. Phyllis Poe Kinney and I.W. “Bud” Kinney, Eloise was born in Laramie, Wyoming, on April 16, 1957. She loved the family she came from and she lived for the one she made with Bill Schmich, whom she met in 1979 in Eugene, Ore., while he was working as a cook at Mama’s Homefried Truckstop. She called him Darlin’ Bill and after their marriage in 1989, they raised two beloved sons, Ivan and Jasper Schmich Kinney. Bill died in 2013 and she missed him every day afterward.

Other things Eloise loved: Gardens, elephants, thrift shopping, pancakes, baseball (especially the Chicago Cubs), the Argentinian musician Astor Piazzolla, her little dogs Tugg and Ollie, and before them her little dog Boutros Boutros-Ghali, named after a secretary-general of the U.N.. She didn’t give a hoot about cooking but she loved Bill’s, especially his homemade bread. She also loved singing harmony. She fondly remembered how as a member of the University of Wyoming choir, she went to Russia and to Mexico, and how in Mexico an earthquake emptied the auditorium but the choir sang on. She loved her mother, who is 97, and they were good friends throughout her life. And Eloise loved stories. “No, no, no,” she was known to admonish those telling a story poorly, “Don’t just tell the facts. You need to embellish!” She once walked into a spider web and screamed; she insisted the spider screamed too. She had a strong belief in things unseen.

Eloise and Bill lived for a while in Chicago, where she worked at the American Library Association. She later did freelance copy editing and served as a judge for the Chicago Tribune’s Nelson Algren Short Story awards. She had a sense of mischief and a ready laugh. She also had a tender soul; music could make her weep. An incisive writer with a sly wit, she wrote sharp book reviews. Much of her writing, however, exists in the emails she shared with a wide group of correspondents. She occasionally emailed editors at the New York Times to correct errors.

An avid reader with two master’s degrees, she wrote to famous authors, including the

Canadian novelist Robertson Davies, who replied to her missives with a handwritten note. She wrote radio host Garrison Keillor, asking that he hire her mother as the “national weatherwoman” who, based on maternal experience and training as a psychologist, would forecast ominous clouds every day for the entire country. Keillor read her letter on his show, giving credit to Eloise.

In addition to her mother and her two sons, Eloise is survived by her siblings Majel Gardzelewski, Lisa Kinney, Bob Kinney, Todd Kinney and Laramie “Flippy” Kinney as well as by many adoring in-laws, cousins, nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her father, by her beloved brother Wayne Kinney III, and by Ruth Poe, known as “Gammi”, the maternal grandmother who helped raise her.

Her niece Jeanette Gardzelewski, who was trained by Eloise at an early age to call her “my favorite aunt Eloise,” speaks for many when she says: “I will miss her dearly and am happy to have so many of her thoughts on movies and music and books and life filling my heart and dancing around in my head forever.” If you have thoughts, stories or photos to share about Eloise, please visit the Facebook page below.

A Zoom service will be held in August, and information about it will also be on this Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/eloiselkinney>. Please send cards or letters to Laramie Kinney at PO Box 1382, Laporte, CO 80535. You may also visit bohlenderfuneralchapel.com to send the family online condolences. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Food Bank for Larimer County in care of Bohlender Funeral Chapel, 121 W. Olive St., Fort Collins CO 80524.

Comments



“ I met Eloise when she took on the enormous task of editing several books I authored for the American Library Association. As copy and edits flew back and forth from Ohio to Colorado we became friends immediately as we shared stories via email on a variety of topics. Mostly though we chatted about our family and friends. She was so proud of her talented sons Ivan and Jazzy and her dear departed husband and shared links to performances and exhibits. She talked about her mother and dad and the gifted Volvo she loved. She proudly shared stories about so many of her extended family members.

She was such a fabulous editor. She could make any sentence a better one. She also had the ability to make the corrections in the nicest way possible. Once I confessed to being "comma impaired" to which she replied with an inferred wink, "oh, no, you're definitely not comma impaired".

I miss Eloise but am so glad we met.

May time bring peace to us all.

BARBARA MATES - August 22, 2020 at 06:54 PM



“ I loved Eloise's wit and humor, from grade school on. She was bright and funny, and she typically called me on my baloney, but did it with a laugh. We were rivals (the last two every year in the grade school spelling bees) , and we traded wins, but whenever I lost to her, it never bothered me because she she wasn't puffed up or prideful. It doesn't surprise me at all that she wrote to famous people who responded, or that they responded. We prided ourselves on the power of the pen, and she surely could have been one of those famous people. Her insight was keen, and her self-deprecating manner made her easy to talk to or read.the world is surely a much poorer place with the loss of Eloise.

Hugh Smith - July 15, 2020 at 11:46 AM



“ That is a beautiful painting of Eloise! Thoughts and prayers to the Kinney family. Eloise, Bill and the boys have been a wonderful neighbor for over 20 years. She will be missed. Rest in peace dear friend.



Schanna L Preuit - July 13, 2020 at 08:36 PM