



Beryl B McGraw

August 16, 1930 - March 30, 2020

Beryl “Brownie” Byrom McGraw died peacefully on Monday, March 30, 2020 of natural causes following a courageous five and a half-year battle from complications after a massive stroke.

Brownie was born on August 16, 1930 in Pittsburgh, PA to Bernice and Edward Byrom. As a child, Brownie and her mother moved across the country living in many different cities. Her first job at eight years old was handing out donuts for the Red Cross during the war effort. As a teenager, Brownie moved to Denver, CO and attended Maury Junior High School. She later graduated from East High School where she excelled in academics and lettered in three sports. As a Denver East Angel alum, she began her lifelong affinity for collecting angels.

Brownie went on to attend Colorado A&M (now Colorado State University), where she earned her bachelor’s degree in social science, a teacher certification, administration certification, and master’s degree in education. She was a member of the Gamma Phi Beta sorority and kept many of these friends throughout her life. Colorado A&M was where she met the love of her life, Thurman “Fum” McGraw. They were married in Denver Colo. On December 17, 1950, and eventually settled in Fort Collins where they raised their three children, Dave, Mike and Debbie.

Brownie and Fum loved entertaining – whether it be at their home in Fort Collins, their summer home at Red Feather Lakes or the family ranch in the Laramie River Valley. Their faith was strong and St. Luke’s Episcopal Church was a large part of their life – they played an instrumental role in the construction of the 2000 Stover Street building. On Sundays, friends and family would gather at the McGraw’s for coffee and donuts – a tradition that continued on through the years and in the family. Thanksgiving was always a special and favorite holiday where the entire McGraw clan would gather every year at Fum and Brownie’s.

Among Brownie’s greatest joys were her family, traveling, and of course her beloved dogs. Mexico was her favorite destination, where she would often be joined by family and friends throughout her three week beach vacation every year. Brownie loved to read, and she enjoyed staying active with things like golf, tennis and swimming. Brownie had a strong social connection, belonging to two book clubs, bridge club of 60+ years, PEO, travel club, supper club, and the CSU Ram Club. She loved all athletics, and especially loved cheering on her Rams (and was also vocal about her dislike for bad referees). Through all of these connections, Brownie made friendships along the way that have lasted a lifetime – people she has always cherished, and memories she’s held close.

Anyone who knew Brownie knew the extent to which she contributed to the Fort Collins community – proudly serving on several boards and committees, and receiving many honors. There are too many to name specifically, but the following are a few that she held dear to her heart: Inspiration Playground, The Center for Family Outreach, PVHS Foundation, Pathways Hospice, Griffin Foundation Scholarship, Discovery Center, Fort Collins Boys and Girls Club, UCHHealth Cancer Center, and MCR Foundation boards. Her community service roles and recognitions are many, but notable among them are Annual Mayors Award, Max Getts Award, Woman of Distinction Award, Spirit of Fort

Collins Award, MS Hope Award, Fort Collins Lamplighter Award, Zonta Legacy Notable Women honor, CSU Distinguished Alumni Award, Who's Who of American Professional Women honor, UCHealth Illuminator Award, and the National Western Stock Show's Citizen of the West Honor she so proudly received with Fum.

Brownie served in several leadership positions within Poudre School District, including teaching at Wellington and Blevins Junior High, as well as serving as dean of students at Blevins Junior High. She was also dean of students, assistant principal and principal at Rocky Mountain High School, and continued her career as principal at Lincoln Junior High School. Brownie was the first woman principal of secondary education in the Poudre School District. Because of her extensive service to PSD, McGraw Elementary School was named in her honor. Upon retiring from PSD, she took a position at the District Attorney's office as a juvenile specialist for 20 years, where she retired for the second time at 80 years old.

Brownie is survived by her three children, Dave McGraw (Patti) of Wellington, CO; Mike McGraw of Hanna, WY; and Debbie Hansen (Carl) of Livermore, CO; her grandchildren, Sean McGraw (Emily), Tara McGraw, Shane McGraw, Conor McGraw, Lisa Hansen and Katie Hansen; and two great grandchildren, Eli and Acey McGraw; as well as several nieces and nephews.

"Gratitude is the memory of the heart...and the heart never forgets." With great love and gratitude, Brownie's family would like to thank all of those who have supported and loved mom throughout this time. Thank you for all the prayers, thoughts, kindness, flowers, cards, visits and friendship. A thank you from the bottom of our hearts for the care she has received from Columbine Health Systems Centre Health and Rehab staff, the incredible team from Halcyon Hospice, and for the comfort dogs that have visited regularly to bring

a smile to her face. We will miss mom's (Grandma Graw) infectious smile and laugh, wittiness, fun-loving sense of humor, and kind heart.

Due to current circumstances and restrictions, there will not be a Celebration of Life service for Brownie. Please remember and celebrate her in your own way --- by doing something kind for yourself or for someone else. In her memory, donations can be made to: Thurman F. "Fum" and Beryl B. "Brownie" McGraw Memorial Scholarship at Colorado State University Athletics, UHealth Northern Colorado Foundation, or Saint Luke's Episcopal Church, in care of Bohlender Funeral Chapel, at 121 West Olive Street, Fort Collins, CO 80524.

Tribute Wall

JR

“*Brownie was an amazing lady. So thankful for her friendship over a lot of years. She was an amazing teacher and administrator. But most of all she was an amazing friend. I was so happy, worried, and appreciative to have Fum and Brownie’s daughter Debbie In my woodshop IA class that first year we opened Rocky. What a great young lady just like her Mom. Thankful for a lot of great memories. Heaven is even better with Brownie’s Joyful entry. God Bless all the McGraw Family in their mourning and celebration of Btownie’s life. God Bless,
Jim and Sandy Robbins*”

Jim Robbins - August 22, 2020 at 12:56 PM

JS

“*So many wonderful memories overwhelm the sadness I feel at her loss. Long summer days spent with all of you. Trail rides in the mountain. So many wonderful adventures. A life well lived and treasured by anyone who was ever in her presence. Thoughts of grace and comfort at this time.*”

Joni Christiansen Smith - June 28, 2020 at 09:48 PM

TM

“*To all of the McGraw family - Brownie was such a lovely lady. She was the “real deal.” :) Living next door to the McGraw family brings many fond memories to the Murray family. Patty and I visited Brownie a time or two when I traveled here from Alaska and we were both very impressed with how positive she was. Our visits with her reinforced our love and respect for a very special lady. Thinking of you all. Much love, Tim Murray and Patty Martell*”

Tim Murray - April 20, 2020 at 07:46 PM

RW

“ *What a great lady, as all would recognize. Our sympathy to the family especially Dave. Mike and Debbie, Rod and Bobbie Wilhite*

Rod Wilhite - April 19, 2020 at 07:05 PM

KI

“ *Dear Family,*

I'm so sorry for your loss. She seemed like an incredible woman for all she did for the community. I had the honor of attending McGraw elementary School, great school !

She will be missed dearly. ❤️ My condolences.

Kirsten - April 12, 2020 at 10:27 PM

CK

“ *Such an incredible inspiring woman. This community was so blessed to have her! My sincere and heartfelt condolences.*

Carrie Keegan - April 09, 2020 at 07:25 PM

LC

“ Dear Debbie and Family,
My heartfelt condolences to you all at this time of loss. I have so many fond memories of Brownie and Fum. The first may have been at St. Lukes and I remember many fun gatherings at your house and around events probably related to CSU athletics when my Dad worked there (Joe), or when we lived next door to Hersh and family. Brownie was also my teacher at Blevins. I always appreciated her quick smile, congeniality, and calm strength. She was so smart, personable, fun, and didn't put up with any BS! She was a role model for me and for many. At my Dad's memorial service she suggested we get together to share some stories. That visit has been on my to-do list for way too long. Coincidentally (?) a few weeks ago I pulled out a file of articles and photos of Brownie and Fum my folks had saved to share with her (see attached photos). I remember feeling some urgency that I schedule that visit sooner than later and wondered how I might get ahold of her at Rigden. And then your Mom's obituary came across. I am so sorry that I did not make that meeting happen. A poignant reminder to not put off the things that are really important. Your Mom enriched my life. Let me know if you would like to have the file I reference.
Peace and comfort to you all.
Leslie Carter



Leslie Carter - April 04, 2020 at 05:29 PM

MH

“ My heartfelt condolences to Brownie’s family, and to the Fort Collins community who knew her. I had the pleasure of working with Brownie from time to time when I was Director of Community Services at the City. Brownie always had the best interest of the community at heart. She also had a wonderful way of bringing out the best in whomever she touched. Kindness and caring does that.

Marty Heffernan - April 03, 2020 at 11:12 PM

CD

“ What a beautiful and kind woman. She will be missed. My thoughts and prayers go out to you all.

Cathy Davis

Cathy Davis - April 03, 2020 at 01:00 PM

PR

“ Brownie and I worked together at Rocky Mountain High School for eight years. She was a mentor and a friend. She will be missed, but I am relieved that she is no longer suffering. Rest In Peace!

Paul Radcliff - April 02, 2020 at 12:50 PM

PM

“ I knew Brownie from working at Larimer County; she was always such a fun & gracious person. My deepest condolences to all her family & friends. She will definitely be missed!

Patsi Maroney

Patsi Maroney - April 02, 2020 at 09:36 AM

NT

“ *Being the Grandson of Bob and Marian Pike, the McGraw's were a part of my life since birth. I still have and cherish the figurine Fum and Brownie gave me when I graduated from FCHS, and remember with great fondness Sunday visits to their house and having donuts and the many times good times at St. Lukes. You always amazed our family with everything you did Brownie (and you did everything!). We will miss you immensely. Until we meet again!*

- Nate Thompson

Nate Thompson - April 02, 2020 at 12:04 AM



“ *1 file added to the tribute wall*



Carol Salander - April 01, 2020 at 05:11 PM



“ On Monday I lost one of my favorite humans, Brownie McGraw. She was a bright, shining star here on earth! She is now shining ever brighter in heaven. I know that our loss is heaven’s gain. She wanted desperately to be reunited

with her true love, Fum, and am happy that she is finally together with him.

I missed not being able to be there these past couple of weeks to snuggle with Brownie while my handler, Carol, and ministry partner, Ed, giggled,

chatted and prayed with her. I never wanted to leave her side when they were ready to leave. We deeply miss Brownie!

Love and Prayers,
LCC K-9 Comfort Dog Cubby,
Carol & Ed



Carol Salander - April 01, 2020 at 05:01 PM