



## Mary Phyllis Patterson

September 18, 1928 - October 24, 2023

Mary Phyllis Patterson of Evanston, Wyoming and Rio Verde, Arizona, passed away on October 24, 2023, at age 95.

Phyllis is survived by her five children, Doug and his wife Loretta of Omaha, Nebraska, Anne and her husband Ray of Todos Santos, Mexico, Craig and his wife Kathy of Santa Fe, New Mexico, Laurie and her husband Brian of Montrose, Colorado, and Leslie and her husband Tom of Laporte, Colorado, nine grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her husband of 60 years, James Thomas (Jim/JT) Patterson.

Phyllis was born on September 18, 1928, to Roy and Lelah Peterson, on the Weld County, Colorado, family farm, from which she was to ride her horse to and from the one-room school down the road.

A member of “America’s Greatest Generation,” Phyllis completed Loveland High School in the waning years of WWII, then attended the University of Colorado, Boulder, with her sweetheart-then-fiancé Jim, where they were wed in the garden of the Alpha Phi house upon graduation in June 1949. Phyllis then embarked on a life of managing JT and their growing brood, in homes ranging from Butte, Montana, to Loveland and Denver, Colorado, to Worland and Casper, Wyoming, to Colorado Springs, Colorado, to Bartlesville, Oklahoma, finally landing in Evanston, Wyoming, which they were to call

home for over 40 years, in time snow-birding to Rio Verde Arizona during Wyoming winters.

In addition to raising five children, Phyllis was a respected elementary school teacher, some would say a game-changing math teacher. She gave her students a lifelong gift: her strong math students went on to excel in STEM fields, her not-so-strong students gained, if nothing else, a stronger grasp of math concepts and problem-solving, losing their disdain for the subject.

In the broader sense, Phyllis led by quiet example, paving the road for her daughters, daughters-in-law, and female teachers years her junior to self-advocate and fully pursue their goals, whatever the hurdle. In May 1954 Phyllis joined PEO's Chapter L in Loveland, Colorado. At the time of her passing she was approaching 70 years of championing the advancement of women through scholarships and other means of educational support through this respected philanthropic organization.

Phyllis was an impeccable quilter and a uniquely talented and creative knitter. In retirement Phyllis and JT were avid travelers, and their program of taking each grandchild on an educational travel venture when they turned fifteen ensured that they too saw much of the world. Equal to their love of travel was their love of Wyoming and their own home, with frequent haunts being the Uinta Mountains, Jackson Hole, and JT's various fishing holes throughout the state; their practice of planting a tree a year in their own backyard yielded one of the loveliest landscapes in Evanston.

The family will host a celebration of life for Phyllis in the summer of 2024. In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to Fort Collins based GEMS (Girls in Engineering Math and Science), a 401c.3 non-profit founded by Phyllis's daughter Leslie, inspired by her mother's love of teaching math to reluctant 5th-graders. Please click on <https://thequarterproject.org/in-memory> to learn

more.

# Tribute Wall

KW

“ Patterson Family,

*Upon reading of your mother's passing in the Uinta County Herald, I told my co-workers of how she was my 5th grade Math teacher and instilled in me a few of her lifelong lessons in solving Math problems. After that year, we would see each other around Evanston over the next many years and she always had a hello and we'd have a nice chat. I wanted to read her complete obituary and was so tickled to read the paragraph of her fondness for her Math classes. I am sorry for your family's loss, and wanted you to know how incredibly special your Mom was in my life and what an impact she made.*

*May she live on in your hearts-*

*Kerri Wright*

*Clark School Elementary Alumni*

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**Kerri Wright** - November 15, 2023 at 05:59 PM



“ A sympathy card was purchased for the family of Mary Phyllis Patterson.



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November 15, 2023 at 12:49 PM