



Shirley Jean Dietmeier Dwyer

May 6, 1925 - June 17, 2014

Shirley Jean Dietmeier was born on May 6, 1925 in Downer's Grove, Illinois to C. Richard Dietmeier and Verna Lena Garrison Dietmeier. Shirley had three brothers, Richard, 1917-2001, Joseph 1923-2007, and Robert 1928-2007. Shirley was the first girl in three generations on her father's side, and was a celebrated child on Saratoga Avenue. She was bright, cheerful, and active, and despite a heart murmur was a cheerleader in high school. Shirley was an independent young woman who convinced her parents that she should attend college. She embarked on the train to the University of New Mexico, where she joined Chi Omega sorority, her home during college. It was through the Greek fraternal community that she met her future husband, George William Dwyer, engineering major and member of the Sigma Chi fraternity; in 1945 Shirley was chosen as the Sweetheart of Sigma Chi. Shirley and George married on October 22, 1946, and welcomed their first child, Leslie Ann, on George's 24th birthday in Downer's Grove in 1949. Leslie was followed by the births of Brian Richard in 1951, Linda Jean in 1953, and Jon William in 1956, all in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Shirley was an enthusiastic mother, who emphasized nutrition and exercise long before it became popular. Her children grew accustomed to friends bewildered by her offers of wheat germ or fresh low-sugar treats and her exercising along with fitness pioneer Jack LaLanne's television program. She cultivated a garden of New Mexico State Fair prize winning roses. She was an expert seamstress, making gowns from Vogue patterns for important events. She was also a loving wife, and her children

recall a happy parental couple who slow-danced in the kitchen. For years, Shirley and George and the children were content on Mossman Place in Albuquerque before moving to Las Vegas, Nevada for George to work at the Nevada Test Site. In 1969, Shirley returned to Albuquerque where she worked for the University of New Mexico until she retired. It was during these years that Shirley undertook a period of creativity, painting exquisite watercolors and crafting ceramic pots. Shirley was a docent at the Albuquerque Museum of Art and History, a volunteer for the Santa Fe Opera, a long time patron of the Albuquerque Little Theater, and an aficionado of musical productions. Shirley was also for many decades an active member of St. John's United Methodist Church in Albuquerque. In addition to her four children, Shirley raised her grandson, Dustin Ammon b. 1975 after his father, Brian Richard, died in 1983. Shirley moved from Albuquerque to Ft. Collins, CO in January, 2003. She settled into her new home at Ft. Collins Good Samaritan Retirement Village where she lived independently until July, 2011. Shirley enjoyed a rich and varied life at Good Samaritan. With her abiding smile and gregarious nature, Shirley made friends and sustained relationships throughout the community, where many of Shirley's friends became close to her family as well. Shirley enjoyed participating in the choir each Sunday and derived profound joy from singing the annual cantatas. She attended weekly history lectures and group discussions and for a time oversaw the community rose garden. Naturally, Shirley also provided menu and nutritional advice and attended exercise sessions as long as she was able. Shirley thrived in nursing care for three years, under the competent and loving attention of the Skilled Nursing care providers. She received the nurturing of Pathways Hospice during parts of that final season of her life. The quality and span of Shirley's life would not have been possible without the excellence of the staff of Good Samaritan, the devotion of the residents of Good Samaritan, and the competence of the team from Pathways Hospice. Shirley's family expresses their heartfelt and enduring appreciation to each and every one of them. Shirley will be remembered for her joie de vivre, love, faith, imagination, inventiveness, self-

reliance, elegance, charm, vitality, and her decree that one should always seek the good in others. She will also be remembered for her optimistic and at times quixotic nuggets of wisdom. Shirley was preceded in death by her parents in 1971 and 1974, her son, Brian, in 1983, and her brothers in 2001 and 2007. She is survived by Leslie Dwyer and husband John Perzow of Ft. Collins, CO; Linda Potter and husband Cal Potter, III of Las Vegas, NV; Jon William Dwyer of Las Vegas, NV; and grandchildren Dustin Dwyer, of Albuquerque, NM; Allison Potter, of Santa Monica, CA; Cal Potter, IV and wife Jenna, of Las Vegas, NV; Bethany Potter, of Melbourne, AUS, and Sarah Perzow, of State College, PA. She also leaves behind nephews Jon Michael Dietmeier and wife Sara, of Las Vegas, NV, and Bill Dietmeier and wife Bonnie, of Northbrook, IL; and nieces P. J. Dietmeier of Corrales, NM, and Lisa Dietmeier Sill and husband Patrick Sill of Delray Beach, FL. A memorial service will be held on Friday, June 20, 2014 from 12:30 – 2:30 p.m at Fort Collins Good Samaritan Chapel, 508 W Trilby Rd.

Tribute Wall

PS

“ Dear Leslie, John, Sarah and family, just reading this beautiful biography of your Mother, Leslie, and feel the respect and love within each line. I know this time comes with a flooding of memories and I hope they surround your hearts with warmth as the years pass on. Thinking of you with peace.

Pamela Sachs - June 29, 2014 at 12:00 AM

KM

“ My mother, Phyllis Keenan, was deeply saddened to hear of Shirley's passing. They were first sorority sisters then life long friends. Mom wanted me to convey her condolences to you all as she fondly remembers wonderful times spend with your mother. I too, remember what a sweet and gentle soul your mother was.

Kakee Keenan McInturff - June 26, 2014 at 12:00 AM

LS

“ Leslie, Linda and John. I was so sad to hear of Shirley's passing today. I don't have to tell you how much I loved her. She was a sweet soul and I am so blessed to have been with her near the end of her journey. Your devotion to her and your love for her is something I will never forget... LuAnn P.S. I saw her last a couple of weeks ago and I asked the staff at GS "how is it that Shirley has a cuter haircut then me?" We all laughed and I know she felt that love!

LuAnn Smith - June 26, 2014 at 12:00 AM

TI

“ *Leslie: Read Shirley's obituary and felt it had to be your Mom. My sincere condolences. Lost Dad two years ago and Mom is in assisted living now at age 85, If you get a chance please email me. Would love to catch up as it's been many years. Tracy Stevens-Ingles*

Tracy Ingles - June 22, 2014 at 12:00 AM

LB

“ *Linda, my thoughts and prayers are with you and your family. You know the love of God and know she is with Jesus. What a blessing that she taught you this. Peace and comfort. Love, Loretta*

Loretta Block - June 22, 2014 at 12:00 AM

CL

“ *Leslie. have thought about you thru the years. So glad you put your Mother's obit in the Alb paper. I remember her well and I know you will miss her. I'm not sure that we have been able to locate you when planning Del Norte reunions. I am having lunch with Yolanda Robles, Claudia Jackson, Laurel Hoffman and Killeen Vandam this coming Wed. If you get a chance to drop me your e-mail or street address we will include it on our list for the 50th. Johnnie McKinney married George Brown after our 45th. We had a few from Sandia come since we all went to Cleveland together. I look forward to hearing from you.*

Carolyn Landolt - June 22, 2014 at 12:00 AM

BF

“ Shirley was our next-door neighbor for many years. She was a lovely person who was always cheerful and helpful. I'm sure she was a real comfort to the military veterans who attended UNM. She occasionally sat with our daughter Kathy, who later returned the favor by sitting with Dustin. Talking with Shirley we found we had all sorts of things in common. She had aunt living in Lena, IL, the very small town where Bob's mother was born, and grew up in Downers Grove, where Esther's brother lived for years. We always enjoyed her company. We were sorry when she moved out of town.

Bob & Esther Fleming - June 22, 2014 at 12:00 AM

SP

“ Thought and prayers to your family. Shirley was very special. She always enjoyed the church choir/music. Even within the last month she would smile hearing the hymns being sung on Sunday morning. I will miss pushing her to the chapel on Sundays.

Schanna Preuit - June 20, 2014 at 12:00 AM