

## Mary Margaret Madden McKee

December 26, 1938 - January 17, 2024



Mary Margaret Madden McKee, buttressed by family members, passed away on January 17, 2024, ending a life of love, leadership, and service. As a 15-year-old she delivered May Day bouquets to older ladies of her church, chauffeured by Harris, her boyfriend and later husband. She subsequently was a cheerleader, co-valedictorian, and class president.

Rejecting the wishes of her parents, Ken & Polly Madden, who preceded her in death, she chose to leave the state of Iowa and their alma mater, Coe College, to enter the College

of Wooster. She majored in English and took enough Education courses to qualify as a teacher. For two years after graduation, she taught English, French, and was the school librarian at Hartford High School in White River Junction, VT and ran a motel in the summertime supporting husband Harris in graduate school.

Moving to California, she served as a department secretary before expanding the family with daughters Margaret and Laura. In California she began two important affiliations; she joined the League of Women Voters (LWV) and the family joined the Unitarian-Universalist church, a departure from the Presbyterian church of her childhood. She would subsequently serve on the Missouri State LWV Board and as president of the Cedar Rapids, IA LWV. As a Unitarian-Universalist, she served on three boards and as President of Eliot Chapel in Kirkwood, MO, and was a founding member of the Unitarian Church of Benton County in Arkansas.

She returned to graduate school and earned an MBA with Marketing concentration from Southern Methodist University at age 40. Working for Mostek, a semiconductor manufacturing company, she initiated the family's love of international travel as she represented the company in international meetings in Munich and Paris, taking husband Harris along. They subsequently visited more than 40 countries.

She next joined Personal Computing, a company formed to provide consultation to the infant personal computer industry. In this role she participated in the formal announcement by Apple Computer of the Macintosh personal computer.

Returning with Harris to Cedar Rapids, the city of her birth, she was soon elected to the presidency of the League of Women Voters, consulted for Coe College and became a

Master Gardener. Next stop was Waseca, MN where she served as a member of the Library board, as the Waseca County United Way director and earned her second Master Gardener qualification.

Moving to Arkansas, she earned securities licenses and built a successful brokerage business in Gravette, served as president of the Bella Vista Library Foundation Board, and was a founding member of UUBC as noted above.

She had a beautiful alto voice and enjoyed singing with groups such as the Sweet Adelines in Dallas and the chorus at the Admiral as well as singing with her family on car trips. Her keen sense of humor continued to delight her friends at the Admiral at the Lake where she and Harris moved in 2017.

Two organizations provided bridges as she moved around the country. She joined her mother's P.E.O. chapter after graduating from high school and subsequently belonged to chapters in California, St. Louis, Dallas, Joplin, Bella Vista, and Chicago. Rotary was the second organization. She was one of the first women members of the Waseca Club, was a short time member of the Joplin club, and was a founding member of the Bentonville-Bella Vista Daybreak Rotary club. She served as club president of the Daybreak club and created a weekly newsletter that was acknowledged as perhaps the best of any of nearly 100 clubs in the district.

She is survived by Harris, her husband of more than 62 years, daughters Margaret Utterback and Laura McKee, Laura's husband Tom Denio, grandchildren Katie and David Utterback, and Alyssa Boge. She was predeceased by her parents and Margaret's husband Wiley Utterback and his son Andrew.

She is memorialized by study rooms in the Bella Vista Public Library and a room at Second Unitarian Church in Chicago.