



MARY PEARL WOLF

February 15, 1936 - November 23, 2023

Mary Pearl Underwood Wolf (1936-2023)

With her children at her side, Mary Wolf died peacefully in her home in Prescott, Arizona on the evening of November 23, 2023. She was 87 years old.

The youngest of four children, Mary Pearl Underwood was born on February 15, 1936 in Arkon, Ohio, to William Alexander Underwood and Naomi Pearl Summerford Underwood. Tragically, Mary's mother died that same day. In 1945, at age nine, Mary and her family moved to Bainbridge, Georgia. It was from Bainbridge High School that Mary graduated in 1954. After working briefly in Detroit, Michigan, 18-year-old Mary and Robert K. Wolf were married in Lone Tree, Iowa on February 5, 1955. Bob was a US Air Force fighter pilot. He and Mary met the previous year in Bainbridge while learning the tango at a dance studio. In their eleven and a half years together, Mary and Bob had three children and they lived in three different states as well as France and Germany. Theirs was a happy, mutually supportive marriage full of love, shared intellectual pursuits, and an active social life.

In 1966 thirty-year-old Mary lost her beloved husband in an airplane crash. Now a widow with three young children, Mary moved to Dayton, Ohio where she raised her children as a single parent. Somehow Mary found time to attend college at nearby Wright State University, and she graduated in 1974 with a Bachelor of Science degree (Cum Laude) in Business.

Mary then went to work at Wright Patterson AFB in Dayton as a civilian contract negotiator for the US Air Force. Her job was to negotiate with defense contractors the price of items purchased by the Air Force. These included aircraft radar systems and upgrades, as well as entire fleets of airplanes such as the Fairchild A-10. As the sole woman in her office, Mary often encountered discrimination from her male supervisors and colleagues. Despite the hostile work environment, Mary was hard working and successful, and through her good work she saved US taxpayers millions of dollars. In her career spanning three decades, she reached the high civil service rank of GS-13. Mary's pioneering example inspired and paved the way for the female contract negotiators who followed her.

In 1989, when Mary's daughter, Stephanie, unexpectedly became a single parent with young children, Mary rose to the occasion. For many years she gave unstinting and loving support to her daughter and grandchildren by regularly making the two-hour drive to Indianapolis, spending the weekend there cooking, doing laundry, buying groceries and babysitting. Mary gave Stephanie much needed respite and she gave her grandchildren the special love that only grandmothers possess.

Now retired, in 2012 Mary moved to Prescott, Arizona to be close to her son, Bill. But soon thereafter Mary's health declined and her daughter, Amy, moved from Texas to Prescott and became Mary's full-time caregiver. Amy dutifully remained her mother's caregiver for the next ten years, until Mary's passing. Mary was devout Christian who read the Bible cover to cover several times. She had a love for learning and she was especially fond of Dickens, Shakespeare, Milton, and C.S. Lewis. Mary's many talents included oil painting, playing the piano, sewing, needlepointing, knitting, and embroidery. She also had superb taste in fashion and interior decorating. Mary excelled as a cook, and was renowned for her stuffed mushrooms, her unique lasagna, and her Black Forest cakes. Most of all Mary was loving and generous to a fault. Her passing is greatly mourned by her family and friends.

Mary was preceded in death by her husband, Bob Wolf, brother Bill

Underwood, and sisters, Betty Wright and Patricia Stewart. She is survived by her children, Stephanie Baldwin, Bill Wolf, and Amy Wolf; sister, Shirley Swinney; grandchildren Trevor and Will Baldwin, Chic Clark and Claire Dillon; step-grandchildren Mike Penney and Kate Gunderson; six great-grandchildren and four step-great-grandchildren. A funeral is planned for next spring in Lone Tree, Iowa.

Tribute Wall

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“ 1 file added to the album *Mary Pearl Underwood Wolf*



Bill Wolf - December 20, 2023 at 09:09 AM