



Marilyn W. Burch

August 19, 1926 - July 19, 2012

GROVERTOWN-Marilyn W. Burch, 85, passed away July 19, 2012 in Highland Regional Medical Center, Sebring, FL after a short illness. Marilyn was born August 19, 1926 in Hamlet, IN to Dwight and A. Marguerite (Vieting) Burch. Survivors include: two sisters, Carol (Richard) Heinrich of Sebring, FL and Connie (Dan) Wegner of Cody, NE; one brother, Warren (Sherry) Burch of Hamlet; nieces and nephews, Jeana Shireman, Nancy Wieczork, Jody Rannells, Richard Heinrich, Pam Mossey, Cindi Nielsen, Ken Heinrich, Debbie Troike, Denise Erlandson, Randy Burch, David Eichberger, Christa Markgraff, Jeremy Eichberger and Caroline Eichberger. She was preceded in death by her parents and one sister, Dolores Gjemre.

Marilyn was a retired school teacher. She was a 1944 graduate of Hamlet High School, a 1950 graduate of Valparaiso University and received her master's degree from Colorado University in 1960. She taught at Ober Elementary, Hamlet Elementary School and Elkhart Community Schools from 1958-1987, where she mainly taught 6th grade. She was a member of St. Matthew Lutheran Church, Hamlet, Starke County Extension Club Cheaper by the Dozen, and the Starke County Historical Society. She was a Charter Member of the Starke County Genealogy Society and a life-long member of the National Education Association.

The oldest of five children, Marilyn was the first person on both sides of her

family tree to pursue a college education. She first pursued a degree in chemistry, but after taking a year off to work to pay her college tuition and acquiring a teaching job at Ober School in Starke County, she realized that her true passion was teaching. Her love of teaching and children spilled over to her family members as well. She took each of her fourteen nieces and nephews on multiple trips to sights, museums, and long jaunts across country. Her support and interest in them continued through college and their adult lives. Her nieces and nephews joined together to celebrate her devotion to them on her 80th birthday with the gift of a trip to the mecca of genealogists, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Marilyn possessed an inquisitive mind and a love of learning. She learned about photography, was a painstaking genealogist, enjoyed and performed music, and applied her technical skill to the area of computers. In recent years, she organized and led a computer club while wintering in Florida to help interested seniors become computer literate. She took on many a challenging project, whether it was installing an underground sprinkler system or overhauling a lawn mower for a neighbor. Volunteering for the Genealogical Society of Starke County, Marilyn researched old barns in Starke County and helped with the indexing of grave markers. Marilyn was an avid reader her entire life (even beginning a new book her last day!) Her enthusiasm inspired many a student, family member, and friend to read and enjoy previously unexplored wonders in the world of books and in nature. In fact, Marilyn loved the outdoors. From the tomboy who climbed trees as a girl, to the softball player, and to the proficient golfer into her eighties, Marilyn was active and energetic. She loved hiking and camping trips in the mountains. One of her favorite excursions was a canoe and hiking trip down the Missouri River after retiring. Marilyn's joy in living was an example to all who knew her. She touched the lives of children and grownups and cheered our successes and achievements in life. Our world was better for having known her and she will be missed.

Funeral services will be Wednesday, July 25 at 11:00 a.m.(Central Time) at St. Matthew Lutheran Church, Hamlet with Pastor Kyle Wright officiating. Burial will be in the Fletcher Cemetery, Hamlet. Friends may call Tuesday from 2:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Rannells Funeral Home, Koontz Lake Chapel and Wednesday at the church after 10:00 a.m. Memorial contributions may be given to St. Matthew Lutheran Church, 2 West Indiana Ave., Hamlet, IN 46532.

Tribute Wall

JD

“ Jim & I would like to express our deepest condolences to the family and friends of Marilyn. She will be missed by all who loved and knew her. We at Sunnypines RV Park are grateful that she was a large part of our lives and send our prayers to all that mourn her passing. Life here will not be the same, Thank God for letting us have her here for awhile. May she rest in Peace in the arms of our Lord.

Jim & Pauline Drehmel - April 29, 2018 at 07:53 PM

WR

“ My, how special a friend Marilyn was to us. When we first went to Sunny Pines Park in Fl., she was one of the first to greet us and offer us her telephone to use to call home. Come on in she would say. :)
Through the years she was that way with everyone. Computer class was the same, helpful to all of us. She gave me a recipe before I left for Mi. and a book recommendation to read. Yes. we loved her and will miss her and we won't forget her.
Dear family, you were very blessed to have her. Praying for all of you.

Wilb & Karen Ringnald - April 29, 2018 at 07:53 PM

CE

“ i have enjoyed many years at sunny pines with marilyn we will miss her and unspoked tasks daily behind the scenes my thoughts and prayers go out to carol and dick and all the family we were truly blessed to know marilyn we reallly enjoyed the 3 sister and their skits at our plays many many laughs

carolyn eckhardt - April 29, 2018 at 07:53 PM

JF

“ We loved and will dearly miss our dear friend. She was an inspiration to me. Our deepest thoughts of sympathy are with you. May God bless you at this time.

Jerry and Fran Fein - April 29, 2018 at 07:53 PM

WL

“ What a wonderful, super woman. Marilyn will be truly missed in Sunny Pines. She was always eager to help anyone that approached her. She was a pleasure to work with on any project we took on together. Our thoughts and prayer go out to her family.

Wayne and Judy Leckie - April 29, 2018 at 07:53 PM

CJ

“ I had the pleasure of working with Marilyn in the Elkhart Public Schools. We were among the first teachers when Woodland Elementary School opened. She was a dedicated teacher and a fun person to know. She impacted the lives of her students and the teachers with whom she worked.

Carolyn F. Jackson - April 29, 2018 at 07:53 PM

RR

“ Marilyn was a very special person and dear friend. Her positive outlook on life was and will continue to be an inspiration to us all. We always enjoyed her conversations about her many interests and her love for her family. She will always be remembered in the hearts of all who had the pleasure of knowing her. Our thoughts and prayers are with all who mourn her passing.

Ron, Becky & Rhonda - April 29, 2018 at 07:53 PM

KS

“ Miss Burch was my 6th grade teacher in 1963 at Riverview School in Elkhart. After we got situated at our desks every morning, she would sit on a stool at the front of the class and read to us. I don't remember how many books we got to hear during the year (I remember one was *Charlotte's Web*), but this was one of my fondest memories from grade school. In fact, Miss Burch is one of the few teachers I ever think about or mention anymore. I think Miss Burch did a great service to her kids by ensuring they were exposed to books and reading, expanding their worlds with imagination and life lessons. She was a wonderful teacher! I'm glad she had a fulfilling and happy life, and a family and friends who loved her. Miss Burch will always be remembered with affection and gratitude.

Kathy Kurtz Sbardellati - April 29, 2018 at 07:53 PM

CC

“ Miss Burch was my 5th grade teacher in the 1950s in Hamlet, Indiana. It is Miss Burch who brought a fresh avocado for the class to taste, telling us it's probably an acquired taste, but a food she loved. Yes Miss Burch, it was an acquired taste, but one that I did acquire as an adult thanks to you. Who in northern Indiana had heard of an avocado let alone tasted one, thanks to Miss Burch my 5th grade class did. Miss Burch also gave me extra attention and encouragement to question life and reach for more, which gave me courage to do many things in my adult life that never would have happened without her influence in my very young life. She was a teacher, a friend, and beacon of light to all who knew her. Thank you Miss Burch. Candace (Rohn) Corley Conifer, Colorado

Candace Corley - April 29, 2018 at 07:53 PM

RW

I searched for her for some time. I believe Ms Burch was my 6th grade teacher at Riverview School in Elkhart In about 1959 and 1960. Ms Burch had a split class. Half 5th graders and half 6th graders. I had her both years. Thank you for a great memory.

Rich Wigstone - February 27, 2022 at 12:26 PM