



Mary Frances Speer

January 10, 1945 - December 10, 2022

Mary Frances Speer, born in Los Angeles, California on January 10, 1945, passed away on December 10, 2022, surrounded by three generations of loving family members.

Mary was born to Elinor and Charles Knecht and raised on the west side of Tulsa, Oklahoma. While she and her mother struggled with the stigma of single-parent family prevalent in the 1950s, these challenges served as a glue that would bond them together for a lifetime and carve out the strength of character she was known for later in life. Mary was a diligent student who excelled in academics and enjoyed participating in school clubs like D.E.C.A., Student Council, and Red Feathers, leading the Tulsa Golden Arrows Baton Corp as its captain, and serving at Trinity Episcopal Church in downtown Tulsa.

After graduating from Tulsa Central High school in 1963, she attended the Tulsa University nursing program and graduated in the winter of 1971. Shortly after graduation, she served on the surgical team performing the first open heart surgery in Tulsa's history. She eventually worked in the burn center at Hillcrest hospital, as a full-time nurse at Hissom Memorial Center where she served those with special needs, and an E.R. nurse at McAllister Hospital, and as a critical care nurse in the ICU unit at City of Faith.

Mary found her life's purpose after her own mother suffered a debilitating stroke and needed 24-hour care. Mary simply would not leave her mother's side and took on the role of the Director of Nursing at the long-term care facility where her mother, Elinor, was placed. She eventually became such an accomplished Director of Nursing, she was hired as a consultant known for her ability to take nursing homes from "worst to first" in terms of quality of care. She was a skilled leader, educator, and patient advocate who always centered her work around building relationships and prioritizing the lives and dignity of those she served.

Throughout her entire life, Mary was a dedicated person of faith. There were a number of ways that Mary gave back to her community. She was generous with her time and resources as a choir member, vacation bible school director, children's choir director, acolyte, lay Eucharistic Minister, and member of the Daughters of the King. She supported local charities in her community such as Chimes, Wounded Warrior Project, Falcon's Children's Home, The Bicycle Man Program, and The USO of North Carolina among others. After her retirement in 2010, she was also involved with St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Erwin where she served as Senior Warden.

Mary was referred to in many ways. Her husband, Frank, called her the love of his life, the children, Beth, Charles, Julie and Jenny, called her Mom and Mother, the grands, Heather, Ashton, Jon, Lauren, Cameron, Bonnie, and Owen and the great grands, Eli, Josie, Dante, Corvus, Alexander, and Lucas, all affectionately called her Mimi, or the one and only Mimster! But we were all lucky enough to call her friend.

In remembrance of Mary Speer, we ask flowers to be sent to Jenny Taylor @ 11305 Ridgegate Drive, Raleigh NC 27617, or in lieu of flowers donations can be made to Chimes, Wounded Warrior Project, or Church of the Nativity, Raleigh, NC.

Previous Events

Family to Receive Friends

DEC 16. 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Church of the Nativity Corlette Hall
8849 Ray Road
Raleigh, NC 27613
<https://nativityonline.org/nativity-home/church-life/whats-going-on/>

Everyone is invited to this service. Drinks and Light Refreshments will be served.

Memorial Service

DEC 17. 1:00 PM - 2:30 PM (ET)

Church of the Nativity
8849 Ray Road
Raleigh, NC 27613
<https://nativityonline.org/nativity-home/church-life/whats-going-on/>

Traditional Service with Communion. Everyone is invited to this service.

Celebration of Life

DEC 17. 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Brent & Jenny Taylor's House
11305 Ridgeway Drive
Raleigh, NC 27617

Dinner and Drinks Provided. Please bring photos or items that you would like to share. All family and close friends are invited.

Tribute Wall



“ *Highlands Cremation & Funeral Care - Maple Springs created a Tribute Video in memory of Mary Frances Speer*



Highlands Cremation and Funeral Care - December 15, 2022 at 11:03 AM

DD

My heart goes out to you Jennie. Mothers are very special. May you find much peace in your memories of your wonderful mother. Love and prayers. Dee

Dolores Donahue - December 16, 2022 at 08:17 PM

PK

Much love to the family. Rest in peace Mary. You will be greatly missed

Phyllis Keese - December 16, 2022 at 10:53 PM

CL

I worked with Mary at the Burn Center many years ago. I have never forgotten her. She was special. May she rest in peace. Christy Lyke

Christy Lyke - December 17, 2022 at 01:54 PM



“ *Mary Frances Speer*

October 09, 2023 at 01:52 AM



“ *Mary Frances Speer*

October 08, 2023 at 10:49 PM



“ *Mary & another member of St Stephens , Church In Erwin. Were our first contact In Erwin.*

Unfortunately both have passed a week apart.

Mary was extremely knowledgeable & Very helpful getting us settled.

May God Be with her forever & a day.

You are already missing & loved Very much.

Frank, you are always in our prayers.

God Bless.

Ferrell & Emma Adkison Sr - December 18, 2022 at 12:52 PM



“ *Like Lynn Anderson, I too worked with Mary in the Tulsa Burn Center. Mary was always loving and caring for the patients who were undoubtedly going through the worst time of their lives. Mary had a great sense of humor and I can still hear her infectious laugh. Even though I was only a burn tech or orderly, Mary always included me as part of the burn team...and I truly appreciated and admired her for that. May God's peace be extended to all her family and friends at this time.*

Terry Martindale - December 17, 2022 at 08:47 AM



“ *Magnificent Life Spray was purchased for the family of Mary Frances Speer.*



December 16, 2022 at 08:43 PM



“ *Mary was such a good mentor for me when I started at the Burn Center. We worked the 3-11 shift and she taught me so much in a gentle, caring way. she was always available and was a walking encyclopedia of knowledge about patient care as well as getting along with other staff and the families of patients. I have thought of her often in the past 40 years, always fondly.*
Lynn Anderson

Lynn Anderson - December 16, 2022 at 08:06 PM



“ *Words are inadequate in describing Mary. She was a force of nature with that positive spirit, infectious laugh that made everyone feel comfortable and cared for. It has been my great privilege to know her and to call her friend in these short years. My heart goes out to Frank, Jenny, Julie, Charlie, Beth , Owen and all of Mary's family. I know the depth of your loss.*

Nancy Taylor - December 16, 2022 at 07:21 PM



“ *Basket of Memories was purchased for the family of Mary Frances Speer.*



December 16, 2022 at 02:38 PM



“ *Ann Clayton lit a candle in memory of Mary Frances Speer*



Ann Clayton - December 16, 2022 at 12:22 PM



Jenny, you and your family are in our thoughts and prayers.

Ann Clayton - December 16, 2022 at 12:22 PM



“ *Mary was the best and kindest nurse I could ever have. We bonded so well and became good friends. She knew how to talk to any state nurse. She taught me prosperous ways to run my homecare business like it was hers. Like we always said Mary, I LOVE YOU!!!*

Audrey White - December 14, 2022 at 09:48 PM



“ *Serene Retreat was purchased for the family of Mary Frances Speer.*



December 14, 2022 at 05:59 PM



“ *Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Mary Frances Speer.*



December 14, 2022 at 03:59 PM