



Mary Tucker

February 8, 2015

Mary Kathryn Tucker, 69, of Sioux City, Iowa peacefully completed her life journey at Agrace Hospice, in Madison, Wisconsin on Sunday, February 8, 2015.

Mary was born on October 14, 1945 in Jefferson, Iowa and was raised in central Iowa by her parents Leo and Bernice Thomsen. She graduated as Valedictorian from Paton-Churdan School District in 1963 and attended Morningside College in Sioux City, where she majored in Biology and German and received her Bachelor of Science in 1967. After graduation Mary moved to Correctionville, Iowa and was a biology teacher at Eastwood Community School District. Mary married James Tucker in 1968 and they had two children, Matthew James and Bradley John Tucker. Mary and James divorced in 1983 but Mary's love of her former sisters-in-law Toots Pittman and Lola Anderson and their families continued beyond the bond of marriage.

After working in sales for several years, Mary returned to her career in education. In 1987 she completed her Master of Arts degree in Counseling and Educational Psychology at the University of South Dakota. Upon graduation Mary worked with Intercorp. Shortly thereafter she joined Dakota Valley School District as a guidance counselor. Mary was a National Certified Counselor by NCCB and in 2006 she was awarded the South Dakota Elementary School Counselor of the Year Award. Mary's career in education closed as it started nearly 40 years prior when she returned to the classroom to teach psychology for several years at Western Iowa Tech Community College in Sioux City.

Mary was a teacher beyond the classroom and was always thinking of others. Often greeting folks with a "Well, hi there!", Mary provided thoughtful encouragement with her laugh, smile or a hand-made card. She enjoyed a wide circle of friends, which reflected her genuine interest in people of all walks of life. Mary's family and friends always found in her a loyal advocate and a patient listener with a caring voice of support or inspiration even through her own life challenges.

Mary's faith provided her strength and comfort. Her fellowship with the parishioners of 3rd

Presbyterian Church was an essential part of her life. She proudly served four terms on the 3rd Pres Session Committee. Mary also enjoyed her rich experiences and lifelong friends from Beginning Experience and PWP.

Learning was also central to Mary's enjoyment of books, family history, travel, art fairs, and music festivals. She enjoyed her monthly book club in Sioux City and in December 2014 published a booklet of recollections from her fellow Anderson family descendants. Mary could often be found traveling around the Midwest and the United States. Mary and her sister Judith enjoyed a special annual tradition, traveling to a new place each year. Over a period of 20 years they visited many states and major cities, most recently a trip to Phoenix in February, 2014 and to Ashland, WI. in September, 2014. One memorable trip was to Germany where Mary and Judy located the baptismal church of their great grandfather, Peter Thomsen, and enjoyed a river cruise down the Rhine. In her travels Mary found places and stories that others might overlook and- like her mother- she loved learning from the variety of people and places she encountered. Each trip brought special memories with stories to be told, photos to be shared, and thoughtful novelties to be gifted. Her travels often included visits to botanic gardens, which provided inspiration in the planting arrangements in her own garden.

To know Mary was to know an avid gardener with a passion for plants and flowers inside and outside of the home. From her favorite blooms of spring to the vivid colors of fall, Mary was delighted by the seasonal cycles of the garden and the world around us. As an Iowa certified Master Gardener, Mary's hands were often found digging in the cool soil as she carefully tended her flower gardens at home. Her garden was a source of joy and she frequently shared plants or small vases of flowers that brightened rooms and lifted spirits.

Mary is survived by her son Professor Matthew Tucker and partner Lisa Stone of Hudson, WI, her son Bradley Tucker and wife Dr. Lindsay Tucker DVM of Winona, MN, her beloved grandson Jack (2) and her sister Judith Thomsen-Lopez and her husband Misael of McFarland, WI along with their children Cesar, Tony and Marisa. Mary was preceded in death by her parents.

Memories of Mary can be shared during a visitation with family from 4-7 p.m. Friday at Christy-Smith Funeral Homes - Morningside Chapel, 1801 Morningside Ave in Sioux City, with a prayer service at 6:30 p.m. Services will be 11 a.m. Saturday at Third Presbyterian Church in Sioux City with the Pastor Cathie Bishop officiating. A private service will occur at Paton Township Cemetery, Paton, Iowa at a later date.

The family would like to thank the team of health care providers at the University of

Wisconsin Carbone Cancer Center and Agrace Hospice of Madison, WI for providing Mary with compassionate support and care as she walked her life path over the last 18 months. Memorials in Mary's name may be directed to 3rd Presbyterian Church, 2925 Chicago Avenue, Sioux City, IA 51106 or to Agrace, 5395 E. Cheryl Parkway, Madison, WI 53711.