



Marilyn Jean Starker

January 8, 1950 - March 9, 2023

Marilyn was born in Eugene, Oregon to Daniel and Shirley (Coombs) McCornack. She was the second of four children. She was raised in Eugene and Springfield enjoying time with her siblings and cousins. From an early age, Marilyn was a caretaker of those around her and especially enjoyed caring for younger siblings, cousins, and baby dolls. She graduated from Sheldon High School and went on to earn a degree in English Education from Oregon State University. She became a substitute teacher and after a three-month assignment as a remedial reading teacher she decided to return to school and studied Special Education at the University of Oregon where she earned a Master of Education with an endorsement in Learning Disabilities that allowed her to teach K-12. Although she earned her master's at U of O she remained a dedicated fan of OSU sports for life. Marilyn went to work at North Albany Middle School as a resource room teacher helping children with learning disabilities gain basic skills. She met her husband, Bond Starker, through her roommate Pat Lemon (Starker) and they were married in 1979. When her children, Jim and Anna, were born, she left teaching to devote all her time and attention to them. Once they were in school, she returned to helping children through volunteering with many non-profit organizations in Corvallis. Her main interests were organizations that helped children and adults with special needs. She considered her work with Old Mill Center the most influential experience in her career of helping others. As a sponsor for single mothers in AA, she saw the need for more community support for

recovering addicts to learn parenting skills. She became interested in finding a way to provide this service and began to work with Community Outreach, Inc., teaching parenting classes. Working with these parents convinced her of the need for a safe, therapeutic place for their children to be while the parents worked on getting a stable life established. Marilyn began to develop curriculum and organizational details to open Mari's Place, a state-certified childcare program as part of Community Outreach's shelter. Mari's Place gave her the opportunity to do what she loved- watching children learn, grow and play. Interacting with the kids at Mari's Place gave her great joy. She served as founder and director of Mari's Place for six years before retiring to spend more time with her grandchildren and to be more active in Starker Forests where she served on the board of directors and Family Council. She remained active in the Philanthropy Committee of the Family Council until shortly before her death.

As a never-smoker, Marilyn was shocked to be diagnosed with lung cancer in April of 2018. Her determination to be there for her family helped her to far outlive her initial prognosis and she was able to continue her greatest joy of watching her grandkids grow and learn for nearly five years in which time she welcomed four more grandkids. In September 2021 she was the featured Beaver Believer at an OSU football game, where she was described as Mother, Grandmother, Beaver Fan and Cancer Survivor. Marilyn and Bond celebrated their 44th anniversary a month before her death.

Marilyn enjoyed playing piano, writing fiction and poetry, reading, walking her neighborhood, playing with her beloved grandchildren and cats, and spending time with family. She loved nature, animals, and the beauty of her favorite travel destinations- Hawaii and Sunriver. Most of all she enjoyed sharing those things with her husband, children, and grandchildren.

She is survived by her husband, B. Bond Starker, her children Jim (Lisa)

Starker and Anna (Adam) May, and her grandchildren: Emma, Sarah, Maggie, Luke, Isaac and Claire May and Emily and Carson Starker, all of Corvallis. She is also survived by her siblings Rose Soriano of Corvallis, Mike (Carleen) McCornack of Eugene and Tim (Caroline) McCornack of Springfield. As well as sister-in-law and friend, Pat Starker of Corvallis, nine nieces and nephews and ten great-nieces and nephews.

A Memorial Service will be held on April 8th at 2:00 at First Congregational Church of Corvallis, 4515 SW West Hills Road.

The family suggests memorial contributions may be made to Community Outreach, Old Mill Center, Linn Benton Food Share or Unity Shelter.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

APR 8. 2:00 PM (PT)

First Congregational United Church of Christ
4515 SW West Hills Road
Corvallis, OR 97333

Tribute Wall

TG

“ Hi Bond. I am deeply saddened for your loss. I did not know Marilyn, but met her at one time as I recall. But I know the depth of sadness in losing someone so cared about and loved. May your grief be as deep as necessary to engage your own resilience, and as wide as possible to employ sweet memories. Be well.



Thomas O. Guss - March 17, 2023 at 01:06 AM

KR

“ I met Marilyn about fifteen years ago when I found my self needing child care for my nephew that I was fostering. From the moment I met her I knew Mari's place was the right place for us. For my oldest nephew and later on his brother she was so supportive and encouraging in their growth and learning. For me, as a young single foster parent who didn't have a clue what she was doing, she cheered me on and encouraged me when no things got tough. The boys grew older but I still saw her from time to time as she frequented the fabric store I work at. Always in good spirits, I will surely miss her.

krystal - March 14, 2023 at 09:48 PM