



Mary Ellen May Harlan

October 11, 1952 - October 7, 2021

Mary Ellen May Harlan passed away peacefully without pain Wednesday, October 7th 2021 following a sudden, massive hemorrhagic stroke late October 5th. Although the love, support, and assistance that she provided to so many through her 69 years of life has been cut tragically short, her spirit will continue to contribute.

Mary Ellen is survived by her husband of 38 years, James K. Harlan; two sons, Arief K. Harlan and Ryan J. Harlan as well as an elder brother Neely May and elder sister, Elizabeth Buras and their families. Her parents were John Bennett May of New Rhodes, Louisiana and Claire Meza May of Slidell.

Mary Ellen was a 1970 graduate of Ben Franklin High School and earned undergraduate and graduate degrees from the University of New Orleans. Her career as a math educator included both parochial schools in New Orleans and the Jakarta International School while she was resident in Jakarta Indonesia from 1985-1998. While resident in Washington, D.C in the early 1980s, she audited union locals for AFSCME and traveled broadly. After returning to her beloved New Orleans in 1998, she chose to focus her energies on family and her community serving as a Cub Scout den leader, scout leader, and working with school communities. She enjoyed immensely engaging with her sons' friends and being a "band Mom" from her residence adjoining St. Paul's High School campus. She routinely worked concessions and served as Treasurer of the Band Boosters for several years. She made up for years of missed Mardi Gras while living overseas by marching along with the band.

Mary Ellen brought caring, intelligent, warmth to all her dealings with people. This brief Facebook post expresses her character well:

My heart hurts tonight knowing I'll never have another conversation with my construction supervisor/ helper/ confidant/ counselor/ and most importantly dear friend. For over the last three years I've been greeted with your "Hello! Hello!" in the mornings followed by "how are you? and the kids?". From anyone else, these words are just a courtesy, but not

from you. You always cared about my answers and offered your help whether it was advice or just an ear. So many times, these few minutes a day kept me going when I was struggling internally. In a world with much judgment and hate, you exemplified acceptance and love.

Relatives and friends are invited to join a Funeral Mass for Mary Ellen that will be celebrated on Monday, October 11th 2021 at 12pm at Our Lady of the Lake Church ("OLL"), 312 Lafitte Street, Mandeville, LA with a visitation beginning at 10am. Interment will follow the funeral mass at Pinecrest Memorial Gardens, 2280 W 21st Avenue, Covington, LA. Anyone who wishes to participate in the Mass, but is unable to appear in person, is welcome to join us in prayer via the live broadcast that will appear on the Our Lady of the Lake Church Facebook page or via a link at ollparish.info.

A memorial service to share reflections on Mary Ellen's life and character will be held at St. Paul's High School Our Lady of Peace Chapel, 917 S Jahncke Street, Covington, LA on Sunday, October 17th 2021 beginning at 1:30 PM. This service may be live-streamed.

In lieu of flowers, the Mary Ellen's sons have suggested contributions in her memory to Tangi Humane Society, 46219 River Road, Hammond, LA 70401, <https://www.tangihumanesociety.org>; or Covington Food Bank, 125 W 30th Ave, Covington, LA 70433, <http://northshorefoodbank.org>.

E. J. Fielding Funeral Home has been entrusted with the arrangements. The family invites you to share thoughts, fond memories, and condolences online at E. J. Fielding Funeral Home Guest Book at www.ejfieldingfh.com.

Events

OCT **Visitation** 10:00AM - 12:00PM

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Our Lady of the Lake Catholic Church
312 Lafitte St., Mandeville, LA, US, 70448

OCT **Funeral Mass** 12:00PM

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Our Lady of the Lake Catholic Church
312 Lafitte St., Mandeville, LA, US, 70448

Comments



“ Sonal and I have very vivid and fond memories of Mary Ellen and the Harlan family from our days in Jakarta when we were friends and neighbors for over 6 years and our kids, Arief and Samir, were playmates. Mary Ellen was intensely devoted to Jim and the kids and more than anything else was an exceptionally kind and gentle hearted person to all who crossed her path. Her ever smiling countenance was her most distinct trademark.

We remained in touch over the years though we lived in different parts of the world and country.

Our paths cross again live in 2011 at Wash U where Ryan had just enrolled and where our daughter had enrolled a year earlier. It was a great reunion with Jim and Mary Ellen.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Jim, Arief and Ryan during this very difficult time, but you can be sure she is smiling lovingly at her family from her heavenly abode. We will always cherish the great memories we have of Mary Ellen.

Sonal and Prabha

Friends of the Harlan Family from Indonesia and Chicago

Prabha and Sonal Nair - October 10, 2021 at 05:01 PM



“ Mary Ellen was a neighbor and a friend growing up . She is older than me , my sisters friend . A fun memory I'll never forget , she referred to my father as Mr. Dot . After my mom (who apparently came first) . Was always a joy to speak with , and share a laugh . She will be missed . Erin Kennedy Radle

erin radle - October 10, 2021 at 10:28 AM



“ You're smile and warmth will always glow when I think of you. Though I spent little time in your company, and then usually around tragedy — Katrina recovery time in a house in Maine and a couple of brief visits during Jim's treatments and recovery — your interest and concern for others over yourself was always a marvel.

Cyndi Flores - October 09, 2021 at 09:24 AM