

IN LOVING MEMORY OF

# BETTY NICHOLAS BOWERS MCMURRY

AUGUST 12, 1929 - SEPTEMBER 7, 2018

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Madison: Betty Nadine Nicholas Bowers McMurry passed away on September 7, 2018 in Middleton, WI. She was born to Hoyt Everett and Florence Paine Nicholas in Ree Heights, South Dakota on August 12, 1929.

Betty grew up in a prairie town with a large, happy extended family that valued a strong work ethic, creativity, and education. She was big sister to brothers Hoyt Jr. and Roger, and had the lofty distinction of being the eldest of 45 first cousins.

Betty was a national 4H winner, a Pepsi-Cola scholar, and having finished high school coursework, arrived at college age 16. She was a member of Kappa Alpha Theta. She graduated Magna Cum Laude and Phi Beta Kappa from University of South Dakota and earned B.S., M.S., and Ed.S. degrees, leading to careers in teaching, speech pathology, and educational psychology.

Betty married Patrick H. Bowers in 1950, after meeting in French class as freshmen at Drake University. She taught elementary school in Lawrence, KS as Pat finished his graduate work. They then moved to New York City for jobs and Pat's Olympic training. Betty worked as an editor in Rockefeller Center and later taught elementary school in New York City.

Several years later and sight unseen, they moved to Wausau, WI for Pat's work with Wausau Insurance. They were delighted to put down roots in Wausau where they raised their children and volunteered in many community organizations. Betty held leadership roles in Newcomers Club, YWCA, Wausau Pro Musica, and First Presbyterian Church. Betty worked at Wausau Hospitals, establishing the Communicative Disorders Department, and helping to develop the Stroke Rehab program and Wausau Neurodevelopmental Clinic. She later joined the faculty of Northcentral Technical College, from which she retired in 1992.

Happy summers were spent in Door County where the family maintained their 1864 log cabin and Pat's art gallery in Ephraim. After a feature article she wrote was published in The New York Times, Betty began writing a weekly column for the Door County Advocate. Later those columns were

published as a book, "The Artist's Wife". She also wrote a cherry cookbook and tested all recipes on her children (who then vowed never to eat another cherry). Pat preceded her in death in 1987.

Betty later married Ronald C. McMurry. They retired to Tucson, AZ where they loved desert life and were founding members of Mountain Shadows Presbyterian Church. A hymn she wrote for its dedication led to her designation as Outstanding New Writer in 1994. They relocated to the Attic Angel Community in Madison in 2006, where Betty enjoyed the company of new friends and groups for the past 12 years, including Covenant Presbyterian Church, P.E.O., DAR, book clubs, writing groups, and more. Ron preceded her in death in 2012.

Betty was a lifelong scholar with a voracious appetite for literature, learning, and theology. She was fascinated with genealogy, and loved traveling and researching family history, prompting her to write books of family history narrative and genealogy for each family branch. She had a specific love of poetry, culminating in the recent publication of two poetry books.

Betty is survived by children: Michael (Vicky) Bowers, Rapid City, SD; Elizabeth (Peter) Aarsvold, Verona, WI; John Bowers, Wilmette, IL; and Susan Bowers, DeKalb, IL. She is also survived by grandchildren and great-grandchildren: Hannah Aarsvold, Atlanta, GA; Kirsten (Benjamin Harvatine) Aarsvold, Quincy, MA; Captain Patrick D. (Sabrina) Bowers, Fort Hood, TX and their daughters, Alina and Maryanne; Matthew Bowers, Rapid City, SD; Eliza Bowers, Bryn Mawr, PA; Jackson Bowers, Wilmette, IL; and Sofia Bowers, Skelleftea, Sweden.

She is further survived by Ron's children: Carolyn McMurry, Paxton, MA; Scott McMurry, Ashville, NC; and Kathryn McMurry, Alexandria, VA; as well as other dear family and friends throughout the world.

The family extends heartfelt thanks to the staff of both Attic Angel Place and Agrace Hospice who provided outstanding care during these last months.

A celebration of life will be held on Friday, October 5 at 11:00 a.m. at Attic Angel Place, 8301 Old Sauk Road, Middleton, WI.

In lieu of flowers, memorials are suggested to Ephraim Historical Foundation, P.O. Box 165, 3060 Anderson Lane, Ephraim, WI 54211.

Please share a memory.

Cress Center  
6021 University Avenue

Madison, Wisconsin 53705

(608) 238-8406

# TRIBUTES

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**Sandy DeWalt** wrote on Oct 7, 2018:

*"My thoughts were with you al on Friday. Our Moms were such good friends ever since they moved to Wausau in1952?? They stayed together though they moved apart to different cities, buried their husbands, and rejoiced with the new husbands. We were so lucky to have them as our Moms. Sandy Smythe DeWalt"*

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**Jon Genier** wrote on Sep 28, 2018:

*"My sympathies to Betty's family. May the hope expressed at Job 14:13-15 give you some comfort for your great loss."*

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