



Susan Mary Milton

September 11, 1939 - May 25, 2020

Some mothers and grandmothers teach their children and grandchildren how to bake, knit, or crochet. Susan Milton was not known for these skills. Sue taught her children and grandchildren how to get their hands dirty from farm work. She also showed them how to get gussied up for a night on the town. Sue proved to them time and time again that it was possible to live it up on Saturday night and still be in church on Sunday morning. She instructed them how to make her famous apple pie for the church potluck (buy a frozen pie and brush egg white on top before you bake it.) This beloved matriarch also trained her grandkids which swear words were acceptable to use during farm work, and when not to say those words in front of their parents. Sue showed them how to find a deal in a thrift store and when to splurge on a great piece. She enjoyed driving a spiffy car with a lead foot, and was known to get out of a speeding ticket or two by faking intense intestinal distress. Her grandkids remember a number of particular shared experiences: being pinched until the words “pretty Ahma” were uttered, taking shortcuts that made a one-hour car trip three hours long, and pushing her grandsons into lingerie sections of department stores and yelling so everyone would look. She teased her family relentlessly and loved them unconditionally.

Susan Mary Martin was born on September 11, 1939 to Vivian (Rieck) and Theodore Martin in Kankakee, Illinois. She came from a long line of strong-willed women and passed that characteristic onto the many generations who follow her. She passed away on May 25, 2020 surrounded by her kids, after battling Alzheimer’s disease. She was a sister to Sandra, Tom, and Michael. She was a graduate of Kankakee High School and enjoyed staying connected with her classmates.

Susan often reflected, “All I ever wanted was to be a wife and a mother.” On December 1, 1957, Susan married the love of her life, Sherman “Kelly” Milton, a handsome farmer from rural Rockville Township, Manteno. Susan quickly adapted to farm life and helped with nearly every aspect of farm work. Her love of animals extended into fostering any creature in need and her barn cats were the best fed in the county. The Miltons were named runners-up for Farm Family of the Year in 1982. Sue felt a tremendous sense of pride in her sons and grandson continuing the farming tradition.

The 39 years with Kelly were among the best of her life. Kelly and Sue were a handsome couple who loved a party; they spent many weekends spending time with family and friends and living life to the fullest. (They were known to shut down Club Irwin a time or two in their day.) Their hobbies were spending time with the people they loved. People know the Milton name because of a legacy built by these amazing people.

Susan loved working with children and made special connections with many kids over the years. She welcomed numerous field trips to her farm and loved to teach children about agriculture. She served as the poms coach at Manteno High School in the 1980s. She worked with children at several schools, including St. Paul's Lutheran School, Bonfield Elementary, and Limestone School. She was an avid fan and supporter of Easy Street Theatre.

Susan was a lifelong member of the Lutheran faith and attended St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Kankakee; she had also attended Zion Lutheran Church in Bonfield. She had served as a Sunday School Teacher, Vacation Bible School volunteer, and in many other roles.

Sue is preceded in death by her husband, one son Eric Milton, and brother Michael Martin.

She is survived by three of her children: Kelli Sue (Larry) Arseneau of Bourbonnais, Lisa (Paul) Tutt of Blythewood, SC, and Brian (Melissa) Milton of Kankakee; 12 grandchildren: Katie (Pete) Bretzlaff, Anna (Todd) Tanis, Maggie Tutt, Jenna (Doug) Rease, Alex Tutt, Austin (Candace) Milton, Molly Tutt (Jacob McLocklin,) Ross (Lyndsey) Milton, Jake Tutt, Thomas Milton, Claire Milton, and Jillian Milton; and 11 great-grandchildren.

Sue had a heart as big as the midwestern sky. She genuinely enjoyed doing things for others. Sue loved to welcome her extended family and friends onto the farm for hog roasts, hayrides, and bonfires. When she saw a need she took care of it. She quietly paid for students' lunch balances, school supplies, and provided food for families in need. One of the biggest ways Sue showed love for her family was by simply showing up. Ahma was at every recital, game, play, and concert. She was her family's number one fan. Sue really was a one of a kind gal. Her smile, warm personality, and loving nature were unmatched. Due to the pandemic, private visitation and services are being arranged for the family by Clancy-Gernon Funeral Homes, with a private funeral at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, officiated by the Rev. Karl Koeppen. A tribute can be paid by those who wish to attend the gravesite rites by meeting for a procession to Bloom's Grove Cemetery. The procession will begin at St. Paul's Lutheran Church on East Merchant Street in Kankakee 11:15am on Wednesday, May 27.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to St. Paul's Lutheran School Scholarship Fund, or the Activity Fund at Bickford House of Bourbonnais.

Since a traditional visitation could not be held, the family would love to hear your favorite memories of Sue. Please email the family your stories or memories at this shared email

address: suemilton20@gmail.com.

The family is profoundly grateful for the loving care extended by Bickford of Bourbonnais and Hospice of Kankakee County. The love and compassion they gave our Mom and Ahma and the extended family Bickford has created will forever be appreciated.

To honor her memory, Sue would have loved for you to support a child in need, offer a stray cat your leftovers, or serve your next store-bought potluck dessert in a glass dish so no one will be the wiser.

“Her children arise and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her: ‘Many women do noble things, but you surpass them all.’ Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised.” -Proverbs 31:30-31

Cemetery

Bloom Cemetery

W. 8270N Rd.

Manteno, IL, 60950

Comments



“ Remember that Crosby Stills Nash and Young song, "Teach Your Children Well"? (I would share a link to the song but can't do it at the same time with this other link.)

I think the song is more to parents, but still there are many many many who have helped me teach my children well. This lady is one of them. So many others (and this list does not include ALL - so I'm sorry for missing some) Lesley Ann Freeman, Cindy Smith Baker, Gene Wachholz, Duane Ferrebee, Ken Klipp, Sandy Zullo. So many others, teachers, friends, coaches, neighbors and oh yeah, OF COURSE relatives. But this is about just this one. So kind, loving, and accepting. She loved kids and always welcomed them. Thank you so much, Sue Milton. You will be greatly missed.

If I could share a memory about Sue, I would be very hard pressed to choose a favorite. I don't know if I should share a bunch of silly stories, it might be a bit too much on this tribute page.

Obviously, like the obit reads, a good hearted woman who loved good times, good friends and family, and was devout in her faith.

I related to her on the farm things, it actually surprises me she didn't grow up with that, since it was a very comfortable fit for her. I grew up with it, and always felt a kindred spirit with her.

I got to know Sue a bit more when my kids went to school at St. Paul's and she was so kind, welcoming and accepting of all children.

She and I both had a heart to welcome kids to the farm. Nowadays not every kid gets to have that, and we both enjoyed sharing that with them, and giving them a little of that experience.

I fondly remember seeing her beautiful home decorated with all kinds of mementoes mostly from kids and grands. They were tastefully arranged, too!

We occasionally shared a laugh or two about different school, church, farm neighborhood or other things. I felt a bit out of place being such a French Canadian descent person at a Lutheran church, which is more German, but I'm 1/4 German, and plus it really doesn't matter what ANY of us are, we are all part of the family of God, but it was just one of those funny things that Sue and I shared privately. Her mom (and she was a lovely lady too) was if I remember correctly 1/2 French. Sue and I laughed about some of the French and German stereotypes. Of course it is wrong to stereotype people, but sometimes it is just funny when it is harmless humor. I did love that she had the German "Ahma" grandmother title, as we always had the French "Mim" (which I am one now), it was just another common bond.

She was so kind and welcoming, and with such a great sense of humor and a big big heart. I am so glad I got to know her, and so glad she was a part of my life and my kids' lives. My deepest condolences to the family - so many of you I feel so bonded with too. She wasn't your only great influence, but she is the one we are missing today. No doubt she is enjoying a wonderful reunion with her beloved Kelly, Eric,

mom, and many others. Big hugs and much love to all of you.

Charmaine Sims - June 02, 2020 at 12:41 PM



“ We are so sorry for your loss, may your memories help with your grief. She was a wonderful lady.

Andy & Darla Fritz

Darla Fritz - June 01, 2020 at 10:33 AM



“ I loved Sue Milton . She was my Sunday school teacher and my children's. When I became a single Mom she would come pick my children up for Vacation Bible School so they were able to attend. Always a beautiful smile for everyone. One of the last times I saw her at church, I told her that growing up I was in awe of her fashion and style. She beamed and thanked me for the kind words. I am happy that I took the time to share the beautiful memories I have of her with her. In honor of this beautiful person, stop and share a wonderful memory you have with a senior. It will make a wonderful memory for both of you. My heartfelt and sincere sympathy goes out to the entire family of Sue Milton. May God give you peace, strength and comfort during this difficult time knowing she is with her Lord.

Marla Miller - May 31, 2020 at 12:17 PM



“ She was an amazing lady. Sorry for your loss. I loved seeing your whole family at Zion when you were there. I was sad to see this. She was a great lady. My sympathies to your family. God bless all of you.

Debra Wendling - May 30, 2020 at 05:26 PM



“ Also that was the most wonderful obituary I have ever read. It sure told a lot about her and was very spot on for the person I remember. I loved reading it. Thanks

Debra Wendling - May 30, 2020 at 05:31 PM



“ Sue was definitely a great lady. She was my Sunday School teacher at Zion Bonfield many years ago and she was the best. I just started seeing her again recently when my dance group went to Bickford House to entertain. She loved watching and always told us to come back soon. I am sad knowing I won't get to see her the next time we are there. My sympathies to Kelli, Lisa, and Brian and their families.

Sheila Pfaff - May 30, 2020 at 01:16 PM



“ “Mrs. Milton” as my daughters called her was such a special influence as their preschool teacher at St. Paul’s. She had a way of making every child feel so special with her kind smile and warm hugs. We would run into Sue a few times a year at Paula Aubrey, Easy Street Theater, even at Marshall Fields on State Street and she always flashed us her smile and remembered the girls and gave us all hugs. I can only imagine how many lives she touched throughout the years. May she be resting in the arms of our Savior, Jesus Christ and rejoicing with all those she loved who have gone before her. With our deepest sympathy,
The DePasquale Family



Rhonda Depasquale - May 29, 2020 at 10:20 AM



“ We were so sorry to hear of Sue’s passing! She was such a special lady and always such a joy to be around. She will be missed. Loved her obituary hopefully all of your wonderful memories will get you through the sad times.

Nancy Poland - May 29, 2020 at 09:34 AM



“ I want to express my condolences to everyone. I felt honored to know your Mom/Ahma and have an idea of what a loss this will be for your family. She was a lovely woman and there are very few who can share the impact she had on others. My thoughts and prayers are with you.
Rosemary LaMontagne (Brockman)

Rosemary LaMontagne - May 28, 2020 at 11:18 PM



“ I met Susan about 20 years ago at the salon where she worked, and her granddaughter, Anna, worked as a stylist. I was new to the community and Susan was very welcoming to me.
Just this past December, 2019, I spoke to Susan at Bickford where the Maternity B.V.M. Choir was entertaining the residents. She sat, sang, and smiled with the choir. I still see her bright smile as she enjoyed that day.
God bless, Susan
Chris Wilbur, friend

Chris Wilbur - May 28, 2020 at 11:41 AM



“ Our deepest sympathy to the entire family. Sue was quite the "character"!! We were blessed to have known her.
Dave and Bonnie Pinnow

Dave and Bonnie Pinnow - May 28, 2020 at 10:47 AM



“ I have many fond memories of working with Sue stocking Bath and Body Works during the holidays. She was a lovely lady and will be missed.

Emily Linton - May 28, 2020 at 07:51 AM



“ The whole Milton family is in our prayers. Sue Milton was one in a million. I don't think she ever met a "stranger". You were her friend, the moment she learned your name. My favorite memories are processing our own cows and pigs at Uncle Jack Donohues farm. Nothing better in the whole world, then a Milton fresh pig. Sue would help me figure how things worked, when a city newlywed found how meat was really processed, on the farm! May her and Kelly be reunited in heaven forever. God bless you all.

Sue and Dan Nugent - May 27, 2020 at 11:26 PM



“ We will miss you Aunt Sue. She was a special lady!! She was amazing with Mia and I will always be so great full for all her help with her. Mia absolutely loved her. They had a special bond.

Jaime Martin - May 27, 2020 at 10:31 PM



“ Susan and I have been friends since 1947 and live three houses apart. We attended Washington grade school, west Jr. high school, and KANKAKEE HIGH SCHOOL. She has always held a very special place in my heart! She is absolutely one of a kind :-) her humor was present in every situation :-) I loved her and continued to visit her every week this last year. She always knew who I was, which always made me happy. My heart has a hole in it that will never be filled I know that Kelli has waited a long time for you and that heaven is definitely a better place with you in it. I do feel bad that I did not know about the service this morning or I would have attended.

Glendal Kilbride - May 27, 2020 at 08:53 PM



“ I am so sorry for all of you. A mother is a special friend. Your mom was fun loving & kind. Her years of dedication to the pom squad showed her belief in our youth as a worthwhile cause. She marked many lives and probably never realized it. Prayers for all & may God's peace be with each of you...

Mary Rouleau - May 27, 2020 at 04:37 PM



“ Margie Kenney lit a candle in memory of Susan Mary Milton



Margie Kenney - May 27, 2020 at 12:51 PM



“ Such a sweet lady...seems just like yesterday she sat in my office talking about her Mom....sad such a trying time had our paths crossed but came to love Vivian, in spite of herself, and loved talking and laughing with Sue. My thoughts and prayers are with all who love her.



Loretta LaBrec - May 27, 2020 at 09:53 AM



“ Sympathy and prayers for Sue's loved ones. She was a great lady and gave so much of herself to the children at Bonfield Grade School. I loved seeing her everyday and our special talks. She will be and is missed. Rest in peace my friend.

Sherry Parks - May 27, 2020 at 09:22 AM



“ Sherry Parks lit a candle in memory of Susan Mary Milton



Sherry Parks - May 27, 2020 at 09:20 AM



“ Sue and her entire family touched Donna and me in more ways that we can even count. God used her gifts and talents to touch all those who were blessed to know her and those families and children that she served. Our hearts and prayers are with the entire Milton family who are so dear to us. We love you all!

Richard Nordmeyer - May 27, 2020 at 09:11 AM



“ She was always a warm, welcoming woman and a great hostess for kids and parents at the farm. Sympathy to all the family.

jane veers - May 27, 2020 at 09:01 AM



“ Wanda Ohrt lit a candle in memory of Susan Mary Milton



Wanda ohrt - May 27, 2020 at 03:26 AM



“ What a wonderful lady! So giving and a great sense of humor. She was a hard worker and you see the same traits in all her children. She taught them to be kind and do for others and the tribute written by her family shows what an example she was. Her love for God and family was evident . She will be missed.

Janice Fender - May 26, 2020 at 10:08 PM



“ My sincere deep condolence to all of the Milton family. I will never forget the fun times with Sue and her family over the years. My friendship with Lisa grew and just like that Sue treated me like part of the family. I will never forget the parties at the farm, working with Sue at Bath and Body Works, and going out for dinner with the girls. I will cherish those memories forever....Rest in peace Sue. God broke the mold when he made you.

Shari Schneider - May 26, 2020 at 10:00 PM



“ Praying for you all during this difficult time. It is a pain beyond words to lose a mother. Her obituary was a wonderful tribute to a beautiful Christian woman who I always remember offering a smile, hello and hugs. See you in Heaven. Blessings,
Gina Harpin-Holmes

Regina Harpin-Holmes - May 26, 2020 at 09:39 PM



“ So sorry to hear about Sue. She and Bill teased each other relentlessly and I think they both equally loved it. She had such a great sense of humor. We also were so glad that we were able to share the trip to Italy with her and her girls. She was a lot of fun. Our prayers are with your family at this time.

Kim Balgeman - May 26, 2020 at 09:03 PM



“ I LOVED working with Sue at LGS! She was ALWAYS a joy to be around! My thoughts and prayers are with her family.

Maggie Prendergast - May 26, 2020 at 08:08 PM



“ So sorry to hear about Sue. I will always remember SUE. We went to high school together she was always so much fun. She will really be missed. My prayers to out to the family,

Sandy Schweigert - May 27, 2020 at 02:33 PM



“ My prayers are with you and your family.

Delories Spears - May 26, 2020 at 06:24 PM



“ Ahma was loved by all the St Paul's students. The preschoolers really enjoyed their field trips to her farm.
She was so much fun and just a wonderful lady!

Linda Shamblin - May 26, 2020 at 05:37 PM



“ Loved our time together in the classroom. So many fun trips to her farm and being a teacher to her grandkids. I still have one of the ornaments on my Christmas tree given to me by the grandchildren. Will be missed.

Lesley Freeman - May 26, 2020 at 06:06 PM



“ We are so very sorry to hear of Sue's passing. We have great memories of such a lovely and fun woman. Please accept our deepest sympathy. We really appreciated reading the beautiful obituary that was written for her. I know she will be dearly missed by all of her dear family and all who knew her.

Linda Schreck - May 26, 2020 at 03:42 PM



“ Ghirardelli Galore was purchased for the family of Susan Mary Milton.



May 26, 2020 at 03:13 PM



“ Sue was one of the first residents I had the privilege of meeting and I always looked forward to her sass and humor. We are all so blessed to have known her. She will be dearly missed.

Mia - May 26, 2020 at 03:04 PM



“ Hugh Janda lit a candle in memory of Susan Mary Milton



Hugh Janda - May 26, 2020 at 02:56 PM



“ What a wonderful obituary! It tugged at the heart. I have great memories of all the Milton's from my High School years. Lots of laughter. My deepest sympathies to all of you. She left such a positive mark on all who knew her.

Hugh Janda - May 26, 2020 at 02:55 PM



“ My sympathies and condolences to the Milton family.. Sue was a wonderful person and will be so missed. I remember visiting their farm with fond memories.. thinking of all of you.

Jan Hendrickson Justus - May 26, 2020 at 02:47 PM



“ Beautiful obituary for a spirited lady! The Milton family sat a pew in front of the Booi family at St. Paul's for years. Always looked forward to seeing Sue and her family and grandkids each week. She was quick witted, that one! I also remember for several months after her husband passed Sue sitting quietly, tears flowing for her lost love.... I now know how she felt, and hope to have the grace, patience and faith she displayed at her loss..... my thoughts and sympathies are with you all.

lisa winge - May 26, 2020 at 02:45 PM



“ Les & Greta Naese lit a candle in memory of Susan Mary Milton



Les & Greta Naese - May 26, 2020 at 02:04 PM



“ Mrs. Milton was a wonderful lady! My kids just loved her at St Paul's and Limestone! Rest in peace. Sorry for your family's loss!

Jodi Goodrich - May 26, 2020 at 02:00 PM



“ Sending deepest sympathy to the Milton families. She touched so many lives... countless children at St Paul's including my own. She was Ahma to all the kids! Just a wonderful lady who had such a quick wit and gave so much of herself. Always in our hearts... the struggle is over. Now reunited with Viv, Kelly and Eric.

Linda Chouinard - May 26, 2020 at 01:12 PM



“ I remember meeting Sue for the first time at Purdue University. Doug and Jenna had been dating so we all went to dinner. She was so kind, sweet, and friendly to me. She even shared that all Lutherans go to heaven. Our sincere condolences to her family. She will be missed.
Randy and Libby Rease

Libby Rease - May 26, 2020 at 12:15 PM



“ Sue was so generous in opening her farm to our preschoolers from St.Pauls as well as her time as a volunteeet there. The children really loved her.

Linda Shamblin - May 26, 2020 at 12:57 PM



“ What a fitting obituary! It made me laugh and made me cry. She was a special lady!
Her family was blessed to have her!

Rita McClure - May 26, 2020 at 12:11 PM



“ Garden Accent Stone - 'Wherever a beautiful soul...' was purchased for the family of
Susan Mary Milton.



May 26, 2020 at 12:06 PM