



Elizabeth Jane Koalska Piccard

January 10, 1925 - August 29, 2013

Betty Piccard died peacefully in her bed at Westminster Oaks on Thursday, August 29, 2013. Her final days were spent in the company of many members of her beloved and extensive circle of friends, and she shared her final hours and moments with her daughter Ann.

Betty was born in a blizzard on January 10, 1925, in St. Paul, MN, the second daughter of James and Mary Koalska. She was a dark-haired, blue-eyed beauty and a brilliant student when she met the love of her life, Paul Piccard, at U. High in Minneapolis. Betty was dating Paul's good friend Jim Christiansen; Paul stole Betty from Jim, and Jim converted to Catholicism and became a monk.

Betty graduated summa cum laude from the University of Minnesota, and immediately followed that with her MSW. She was proud to have been a Navy WAVE during WWII, but was always clear that her military career's highlights included eating pizza for the first time and dancing with a lot of soldiers. Paul had wanted to get married before he was shipped out but Betty told him in no uncertain terms that she saw that as a very impractical move, so they waited.

Betty married Paul (finally, after keeping him waiting for those war years), on August 1, 1947 in St. Paul, Minnesota. While Paul completed his Masters at the U, Betty gave birth to Bob. They moved to Austin, Texas, and in the time it

took Paul to complete his Ph.D. at UT, Betty gave birth to first Jane and then John. They moved to Tallahassee in 1953, where Mary and Ann were born. Betty began working for the Leon County Mental Health Association the minute her youngest child started school. She joined the FSU School of Social Work faculty in 1965, and remained an important member of that institution until her retirement in 1993, touching the lives of hundreds of students and colleagues over the course of her career.

Betty was an early member of the League of Women Voters and an ardent, lifelong feminist with strong left-wing politics (not generally a popular thing in Tallahassee in the 50's and 60's). She and Paul surrounded themselves with many wonderful like-minded friends from the FSU faculty and elsewhere. They also traveled the globe together but always came home to their friends and family in Tallahassee and Lake Vermilion, Minnesota.

Betty was living at the Westminster Oaks health care center at the time of her death from heart failure. Her body disappointed her in the last year of her life, but her mind never faltered, and she was winning Scrabble games and engaging in clear, logical, philosophical conversations up until the very end.

Betty was predeceased by her beloved Paul and their dear son John. She is survived by her son Bob and by daughters Jane Piccard and her husband Hunt Greene and their children, Chris & Julie Greene and Brennan & Natasha Greene; Mary Vance and her husband James and their son Dylan and his children, Alex and Zadie; and Ann Piccard and her husband Charles Reischmann and their children, Elizabeth, Mary, and Paul Reischmann. Betty is also survived by her daughter-in-law Geraldine Piccard, Geraldine's daughter Georgia Hewitt, and Georgia's children Parker and Ella. She is survived by her sister, Eleanor McClary. She leaves behind a host of dear and loyal friends too numerous to list.

A funeral Mass will be held, at Betty's request and in her honor, at Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church at 11:00 a.m. on Tuesday, September 3, 2013. A reception will follow from 12:30 to 1:30 pm in the pool house of Westminster Oaks (4449 Meandering Way.) In lieu of flowers, donations may be sent to the Koalska scholarship fund at the FSU School of Social Work, care of the FSU Foundation, 2010 Levy Avenue, PO Box 3062739, Tallahassee, Florida 32306-2739.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

SEP 3. 11:00 AM (ET)

Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church
624 Miccosukee Rd.
Tallahassee, FL 32308

Reception

SEP 3. 12:30 PM - 1:30 PM (ET)

Westminster Oaks Chapel
4449 Meandering Way
Tallahassee, FL 32308

Tribute Wall



“ *Ann and family, our thoughts and prayers are with you. Paula and Jack Rigsby*

Paula - August 31, 2013 at 07:35 PM