



Laurel Kelsey Wells

December 16, 1947 - April 12, 2020

On Easter Sunday, April 12, 2020, Laurel Ann Kelsey Wells, beloved mother and grandmother, passed away at the age of 72 due to complications from multiple sclerosis. Laurel was born on December 16, 1947 to Lester L. Kelsey, Jr., and Grace Elizabeth "Betty" (Armstrong) Kelsey. She often reminisced of her loving home and happy childhood, and adventures she and her brother, Howard, would have with their many aunts, uncles, cousins, and friends. Laurel loved to dance, nurturing her talent with dedication and dreams. Her friends talk of her as their own version of Audrey Hepburn - polished, graceful, elegant, and magnetic. She brought her humor and spark to activities at Will Rogers High School - journalism, homecoming court, spirit club, and many others. She went to Northeastern State University to pursue journalism, joined Sigma Sigma Sigma sorority, and felt the calling for what would become one of her great legacies - the field of education. Laurel's heart for children began with her daughters, Katy Beth Shaddock and Kelsey Suzanne Holder. She was a devoted and loving mother, mentor, friend, and cheerleader. Laurel's girls grew in the warm sunlight of her love. She rejoiced in guiding us to our savior, Jesus Christ, teaching us to see beauty and possibility in the world, and challenging us to achieve our potential through education and hard work, the keys to our dreams of building rewarding careers while growing our own families. She cherished her grandchildren, Kyler, Cole, Jacob, Sara, Elijah, Hawkins, Mimi, and Miriam, treating each individually as a priceless and irreplaceable jewel, which she polished and shined with love and support for every endeavor and achievement. Laurel would light up with joy and love as she regaled friends and family with stories of her girls, her grandchildren, and her sons-in-law, David Shaddock and Brandon Holder, and stepdaughters Jennifer and Lindsay. Laurel was an outstanding teacher, and while earning two masters degrees, touched the lives of so many, from her early teaching career in Catoosa and McAlester, then to Broken Arrow Public Schools, teaching at Arrowhead and Vandever, a counselor at Leisure Park, an assistant principal at Park Lane, and then Tulsa Public Schools where she was Principal of Park Elementary, adjunct professor at Tulsa Community College and Langston University, and for the last ten years of her career, at Starrett Elementary in Arlington, Texas. After retirement, Laurel worked as an educational leadership consultant, and throughout her career, the stories of how she mentored and encouraged countless

people are inspiring evidence of her true servant leadership. Katy and Kelsey would like to give special thanks to David Shaddock for his love and support as Laurel's caregiver and friend, Grace Hospice for the miracles they worked to bring Laurel home to be with her family in her final moments in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, and Redeemer Church for embracing Laurel as part of our congregation.

Events

APR **Viewing** 11:00AM - 01:00PM

16

Floral Haven Visitation Suites

6500 S 129th E Ave., Broken Arrow, OK, US, 74012

Comments



“ An external video has been added.



Floral Haven Funeral Home, Crematory and Cemetery - April 16 at 02:47 PM



“ Laurel was my principal at Starrett elementary until she retired. I will always remember her as a great boss and colleague. She will be missed.

Robert Roszak - April 19 at 06:07 PM



“ Laurel was the best principal any teacher could be blessed to work for. She took me under her wing at Starrett and was supportive and encouraging every day I worked there. Heaven gained a special angel. Sending love to her family during this difficult time. She is dancing without pain now.
Kristin Merkle

kristin merkle - April 16 at 04:15 AM



“ Laurel was so special to many friends and I was blessed to be one of our friends. She had such a never ending love for kids, students, family and friends. Our kids especially Jay had such affection for her and she was always encouraging him to follow his dreams of becoming a dancer. Please know that the Franke is so sorry and praying for each of you during this time. Also please know that her life will live on the hearts of so many students, teachers, friends and families that she touched with her heart and beautiful never ending smile! Our hearts are hugging yours during this time. The Frankes

Jan L Franke - April 15 at 06:59 PM



“ Basket of Memories was purchased for the family of Laurel Kelsey Wells.



April 15 at 04:01 PM



“ i have so many great memories of Laurel over the last 38 years. I especially remember the tremendous gift Laurel had with small children. She could get a timid child talking and telling her everything in a few minutes where others could get nowhere. Children knew she had their best interests at heart and trusted her. We shared so many ideas in common and it was always a joy to sit with a glass of wine and talk about education and counseling for kids. I have referenced these discussions many times as a college instructor. Laurel gave so much and made the lives of so many children better!

Cynthia Dawson Naff - April 15 at 01:31 PM



“ In a friendship of 40 years, there are far too many memories to share. All filled with laughter and love even through the tears. Laurel, was sunshine and every room brightened when she walked in. We raised our children together, and all three of them grew up to wonderful ,responsible adults. I will remember the joy, forget the tears, and be so indebted that I had such a wonderful friend.
Janet Cunliffe

Janet Cunliffe - April 15 at 12:32 PM



“ Nancy Setter purchased the Pretty Please for the family of Laurel Kelsey Wells.



Nancy Setter - April 15 at 10:59 AM



“ LANA GAYE MILLS FILES purchased the Beautiful Heart Bouquet for the family of Laurel Kelsey Wells.



LANA GAYE MILLS FILES - April 15 at 10:44 AM



“ After a 40 year friendship there are so many memories , I don't know where to start. Katy was the perfect child, a lady, gentle and sweet even at the age of two, while my son Steven was everywhere. Laurel's Aunt used to call him the Blue Flash. Laurel said in jest it was because she was the perfect mother. Then came Kelsey. When Kelsey was a infant she had a life threatening condition. I remember sitting up all night at the hospital with Laurel, as we sat by Kelsey's bed, willing her to live. Kelsey obviously did, and had a personality that matched Steven. Laurel and I did so many, many things when as we raised our children, from trips to the park, to sandbox parties, to zoo trips, it was something almost every day. The friendship continued as the children grew into adults. So much laughter, so many potato chips and dip, along with wine. In our sixties, Laurel and I were shopping at Dillard's in Ft. Worth, Texas when suddenly she started tap dancing in the aisle. I snapped a picture of the expression of two of the customers, it was priceless. We laughed over that one for years. There is no way to express the strength of a friendship that goes through the ups and downs of all life's challenges. Sadly we lost contact in the last few years. I will always love her and cherish the fact that this amazing woman, so full of life, joy and kindness was my friend..

Janet Cunliffe - April 15 at 09:34 AM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Laurel Kelsey Wells.



April 15 at 01:32 AM



“ I have known Laurel since high school and the two words that come to my mind are kindness and grace. These qualities are what made her the wonderful mother, grandmother, sister, aunt, friend and educator that she was. I am so happy that I was able to part of the group that welcomed her home and that her last days were filled with love and peace. Dance with the angels, my friend! To her family. I pray God holds you close and grants you the peace that only He can give. Love, Marva (class of '66)

Marva Carnahan - April 15 at 12:01 AM



“ Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Laurel Kelsey Wells.



April 14 at 10:36 PM



“ Chris, Amy, James, Liam and Jon Puls purchased the Enchanted Cottage for the family of Laurel Kelsey Wells.



Chris, Amy, James, Liam and Jon Puls - April 14 at 07:39 PM



“ I remember Laurel as my counselor at Leisure Park Elementary. When I think of her in that role during that part of my life, the word “kind” comes to mind. She was always smiling when I saw her at school. My family moved around a lot, and it wasn’t easy staring a new school every few months. But Laurel’s smile helped and she stands out in my memories as one of the nice people. I have no doubt that countless children felt the same way. I also remember her as my friend Katy’s Mom. Katy was my best friend while I attended fifth grade at Leisure Park and so by default, she holds a special place in my heart. Katy and family, please know that I am thinking of you and praying for your comfort.

Brandee Spoor
Arlington, TX

Brandee Spoor - April 14 at 05:50 PM



“ Your loving brother, Howard, Melanie and Drew purchased the Sentiments of Serenity Spray for the family of Laurel Kelsey Wells.



Your loving brother, Howard, Melanie and Drew - April 14 at 05:31 PM



“ Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet was purchased for the family of Laurel Kelsey Wells.



April 14 at 03:17 PM



“ Laurel was always an example of beauty and grace. I'm so grateful that she was back in Tulsa during her last months so that she could experience all the love from her family and friends. I love this picture of her with some of her many friends who were so happy to welcome her home. She will be terribly missed, but dearly remembered.

Be at peace, dear friend.

Jan Davies Weinheimer



Jan Weinheimer - April 14 at 03:13 PM



“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Laurel Kelsey Wells.



April 14 at 03:03 PM