



Mildred Delores Knowles

October 15, 1930 - August 28, 2022

MILDRED DELORES KNOWLES “Millie” (1930 – 2022)

Died peacefully at home at age 91 of natural causes on August 28, 2022, after a long, happy and healthy life. She was continually and consistently kind, generous, and grateful, and cherished every day that she truly felt blessed to experience. She lived a very unselfish life and loved the essence of the basic things: her family, her friends, her faith, her garden, her pets, and her music. Until her last days, she would smile and say how wonderful it was to see the beauty of the blue skies, white clouds, and green trees, and most of all, to feel the warmth of the sun.

Mildred was born at home in Northwest Washington, D.C. in 1930 in the time of street cars, 78 rpms, and the Great Depression. She was an only child because her sister, Jeanette Victoria, had previously died from diphtheria at the age of 5 in the 1923 epidemic. Mildred was very close to her parents. Her father was employed by the U.S. Government Printing Office and would become a chiropractor, naturopath, and entrepreneur. Their bond was as close as any father-daughter relationship could be. Her mother was a homemaker, cook, and an artist; they visited together in-person and/or by phone every day until the day her mother passed away. Her parents recognized her natural singing ability and arranged for her to record several songs at an early age. She had a happy childhood travelling around the neighborhood with her fox terrier “spot” in the front basket of her bike. Her parents and her aunts and uncles all owned cottages in close proximity to

each other at North Beach, so there were many fun days spent with family enjoying each other's company and playing in the sand, water, and sunshine. She loved going to the beach and swimming in the ocean. Trips to Florida with her mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother were a highlight of her youth. Her teen years included regular bike excursions and church attendance with her nearby cousins and best friends, Richard and Betty.

Mildred attended Coolidge High School where she met her high school sweetheart, Arthur Knowles, Jr. They went on dates and visited family in Arthur's 1939 Dodge. They graduated together in 1949 and began their careers. Mildred went to work as a secretary at the Naval Ordnance Laboratories. Arthur continued working at the Park Pharmacy. They married in January of 1951 and celebrated with a small reception for family and friends at Arthur's parents' home in Takoma Park, Maryland. This became an almost four-decade long romance and partnership of 2 individuals who complemented each other's personalities, skills, and talents. Mildred became the support team who assisted Arthur as an undergraduate student, a teacher, a preacher, a graduate student, and an entrepreneur. She typed and edited his school assignments, his educational materials, his sermons, his letters and speeches, as well as doing the bookkeeping/accounting for the household. It was also the beginning of a life-long close relationship with her in-laws, Helen and Arthur Knowles, Sr., who adored and loved her as much as their own children.

Mildred and Arthur purchased their first house in Riverdale, Maryland. Their first child, son Michael, was born in 1952. During the Korean War, Arthur was drafted into the Army and sent to Japan to serve as a tank mechanic. Mildred, like so many military wives of the early 1950s, kept the family going at home while writing letters and sending care packages overseas. Arthur returned home safely and their second child, daughter Lois, was born in 1955. Mildred was a devoted mom, again a support system for her children and family. She served as room mother multiple times for multiple grades, cub scout and girl scout assistant leader, and transport person for all of the activities, lessons,

and appointments.

When Arthur became the pastor of the “Pilgrim Church” in College Park, Mildred jumped in to assist by singing in the choir, teaching Sunday School classes, and being a youth counselor. She touched many lives with her warm heart and her “find the good in all” philosophy.

Mildred and Arthur purchased their second house in College Park, Maryland in 1962. Only a few blocks away at Hollywood Elementary School, Arthur began his student teaching with a 6th grade class under the auspices of his highly effective and efficient mentor, Mrs. Knorr. The family would never be the same, as students, parents, and other teachers would become frequent guests in the decades to come. When the children were both in school, Mildred started working for the U.S. Department of Agriculture in nearby Beltsville. She was highly proficient in shorthand, typing, editing, diplomacy, and being a collaborative member of a team effort. She was recognized for her hard work and achievement with several promotions – requiring her to take on new roles and move to other locations including the regional offices in Crystal City, Virginia and USDA Headquarters in Washington, D.C.

Her dreams and aspirations to work in the U.S. Capitol came true when she was selected to serve as the Executive Secretary to the Architect of the Capitol. She loved being in the Capitol with all of its history and beauty, while serving others and her country. Her favorite chapter of this experience was her time working with Mr. Miley and associates in their oversight and maintenance roles of all of the federal buildings, memorials, and lands. Her dedication and accomplishments were recognized when she was honored in 1989 with an award, a framed U.S. flag (flown over the Capitol), and a certificate for her 25 years of service as a Civil Servant of the Federal Government.

Although Mildred and Arthur divorced in 1987, they remained good friends in close proximity and in close communication. A few years later, Mildred met Alfred (Al) Catanzariti, an engineer who worked at NASA, through mutual friends. They began dating and discovered their mutual love of dancing,

dining, travel, and of course, family. After having so much fun together, they decided to marry in the summer of 1991 with a large celebration of family and friends. Mildred was happy to gain 2 more daughters and 2 more sons-in-law, and a series of adorable and loving grandchildren. They spent more than a dozen years together doing all of the things that everyone hopes to enjoy during their retirement years.

Mildred was so grateful for all of the positive relationships and experiences that she had over her lifetime. She unconditionally loved and was loved by her children – her son, Michael (an accomplished musician and painter) and her daughter, Lois (a teacher, musician, writer, and most significantly, her devoted 24/7 caretaker). Those who assisted Lois with her care in her last months were especially appreciated and became a part of the family: Maria, Brittany, Margaret, Carolyn, and Lavon. She so loved her close friends and neighbors: Susan Knowles, Suzanne Skinner, Marilyn Williams, Lois Morris, Carolyn Harris, the Fry family, and so many others. She wanted to thank so many people in person for their love and support particularly during the lock-down days of the covid pandemic, especially Patricia Cheimis (family member and good friend for more than 70 years) and Julie and Rob Simmons.

A Celebration of Life will be held on Saturday, October 15, 2022, at Christ Church in La Plata, Maryland. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations could be made to any of the charities that meant so much to her and that she consistently made contributions to in order to support their missions: PBS/Public Broadcasting (www.weta.org), the Humane Society (<https://humanesocietycc.org/>), Heifer International (www.heifer.org), the American Cancer Society (www.cancer.org), and Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center (www.mskcc.org).

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

OCT **15** (ET)

Christ Church - La Plata
112 East Charles Street
La Plata, MD 20646

Tribute Wall



“ *Mildred Delores Knowles*

October 08, 2023 at 10:45 PM



“ *Mildred Delores Knowles*

October 04, 2023 at 03:12 PM