

Marvene Hillier

Marvene Hillier, an Overland Park, Kansas, resident for thirty-nine years, died June 3, 2015.

Marvene was born Oct. 23, 1924, in Grinnell, Iowa. She was raised on a farm by her parents, Leonard and Bernice Pearce. At the age of seven, she lost her mother. From then on, she remained in the care of her father and his sister, Alyce Pearce. In 1942, at the age of seventeen, Marvene graduated from high school and left Grinnell to go to Los Angeles, California, to attend nursing school under the United States Cadet Nurse program. She enjoyed living in California, where she and her roommates made trips to the mountains and the beach and where she danced at the Palladium to the live music of Doris Day, Benny Goodman and Glenn Miller. With so many servicemen in California during the war, it is no surprise that she fell in love with a Marine, Jack Hillier, who had served for two years in the Pacific theater. They were married in Pasadena California in 1945 and, following Marvene's graduation from school, moved to Jack's home state of Illinois. Within a year, they moved to Grinnell. Under Marvene's father's tutelage, Jack began a farming career and Marvene continued nursing, working at Grinnell Hospital, at several physicians' private offices, and at the Grinnell College infirmary.



Marvene and Jack lived and worked in Grinnell for thirty years where they raised their three children. In 1976, they divorced and Marvene moved to Overland Park to live near her daughter and to continue her nursing career. Marvene lived an independent life, owning and maintaining her new house, working as a nurse at Research Hospital and developing many hobbies. As a nurse, she worked primarily in orthopedics and had the opportunity to care for former First Lady Bess Truman, as well as many local Chiefs and Royals players. Marvene loved gardening, cross-stitching and pottery and she pursued these hobbies with enthusiasm. She also enjoyed traveling. She made trips to England, Scotland, Germany, Switzerland and Austria and upon retirement traveled with her daughter's family on several family vacations. For eight years, she and her daughter took an annual vacation to visit many of the National Parks. While on those trips, they called themselves Thelma and Louise.

Marvene lived independently until a fall and Parkinson's disease prevented her from remaining in her home. She endured the loss of her independence with dignity but not necessarily with acceptance.

Marvene is survived by her three children, Cynthia (Craig) Shoup, John (Janea) Hillier and Steven Hillier. She has four grandchildren, Eric (Patti) Shoup, Megan (Craig) Brown, Jacie (Dan) Snow and John Hillier. She also leaves six great grandchildren, Alexandra and Lauren Shoup, Bridget and Amelia Brown, Kamryn Hillier and Tate Snow.

There will be no funeral service for Marvene. Instead, a private family memorial will be held at a later date at Westfield Cemetery in Grinnell, Iowa. As per her request, some of her ashes will be scattered over the cemetery and the remainder will be buried near the grave of her parents.

C/H-R 6-8-2015