

Mary Elizabeth Minner Cochran
July 30, 1952 - Aug. 14, 2020

Mary Elizabeth Minner Cochran
- beloved wife,
mother, sister,
daughter, and
friend - 68 of
Washington,
and formerly
of Montezuma,



went to heaven on Aug. 14, after a brief and intense illness. Funeral services were Tuesday, Aug. 18, at Jackson Church of Christ in Montezuma. Burial was held in the Union Mills Cemetery near New Sharon. In lieu of other gifts, the family would like to request that donations be made to a fund that will be used to create a yearly college scholarship in Mary's name for a member of the Montezuma girls' basketball team. Please contact Mary's daughter Melissa or husband David to contribute or the Holland-Coble Funeral Home. Holland-Coble Funeral Home of Montezuma is in charge of arrangements.

Mary was born July 30, 1952 in Oskaloosa, the second daughter of Elsie Carolyn Marie Klinker and Daryl Elmon Minner. She was raised with her younger brother Tim in the town of Montezuma, Iowa where Daryl was the city ice delivery man and Elsie was a homemaker.

In high school, Mary discovered a talent for sports - particularly basketball. In 1969 and 1970, after many thousands of hours of blood, sweat, and tears, she went on with her teammates to win two state championships, win a record number of games - a streak that is still unbroken - earning a place on the all-state team, and a multitude of other honors before graduating. In 2019 and 2020, Mary was honored with other members of the championship team at the 50th anniversary celebration of the wins.

After graduating high school in 1970, Mary attended two years of college at Ozark Bible College in Joplin, Missouri. While there, she was prolific in sports - playing five on five basketball and performing as a high-jumper.

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on the track team - and was also remembered fondly by her friends and roommate.

In 1980, Mary adopted a daughter - Melissa Marie van Baalen - with former husband Roger Lee van Baalen. Mary adored her role as a mother and providing a warm, comfortable home for her family was important to her. She is remembered by her daughter as a nurturing, supportive, loyal, and devoted mother who loved to laugh.

Mary spent many years as librarian at the Montezuma Public Library, a job that she ended up enjoying and was remembered for by the community.

Later in life and while residing in Fort Collins, CO, Mary was united in marriage to David Brian Cochran, a former childhood sweetheart. For the next several years they lived and worked in Colorado where they developed lifelong friendships. After retirement, they returned to the Midwest and settled in Washington, Iowa. David and Mary remained happily married until her death.

Mary leaves behind a spouse David Cochran of Washington, a daughter Melissa van Baalen (Joel Camins) of Wasilla, AK, three step-children - Micheal (Hiedi) Cochran of Wheatland WY, Rebecca (Tracy) Vaughn of Wheatland WY, and Shawn (Shawn) Cochran of Dodge Center, MN, brother Tim (Roxane) Minner of Montezuma, and nephews Travis (Alicia) Minner of Montezuma, and Eric (Heather) Minner of Montezuma. She was preceded in death by her parents Daryl (Elsie) Minner and her baby sister Kathryn Lou.

Friends and family say Mary will be most remembered for her time at the Montezuma Public Library, her passion for crafts and skill at quilting, her unique sense of personal style, and her kindness. Mary was also a dedicated Christian, loving friend, and cat lover. She will be missed by all who knew her.