



## Anna Maud Lenox

September 12, 1935 - October 18, 2019

Anna Maud Lenox, age 84, passed away at home on October 18, 2019 after a long battle with a disease that took its toll on her body but never managed to diminish her inner strength, sense of humor, or love of family. She died surrounded by four generations of that family, including her newest great-grandchild, her long time care-giver/ best friend Priscilla and her faithful companion, a rescued Catahoula Leopard Dog, Angel. Anna was married for 31 years to Marion Willard Lenox, Jr., (Mern), her childhood sweetheart, the bedrock of her life and our family. Their time together demonstrated the timeless value of love, family, sharing and mutual sacrifice. Mern preceded Anna in death in 1985 but he was always with her. Mern's marriage proposal letter to then 17-year-old Anna from his stateside Army base during the Korean conflict can still bring tears to our eyes. May we all have a relationship so sustaining and powerful. Anna had an extraordinary career in addition to a rich family life. During her time with Mern she moved their household, children, furniture and pets, an astonishing 64 times over the first 20 years as Mern worked as a mapmaker for the US government. In an era with few professional opportunities for women, she excelled as a secretary at White Sands National Proving Grounds for Werner Von Braun, father of the U.S. space program and pioneering German rocket scientist. She left her work in national security when it became clear she would have to leave her growing family for a government bunker in West Virginia in the case of an attack on the US during the Cold War. Anna was reputed to have been the highest ranking GS-15 in the US government with only a high school education. After Mern's death, and against every expectation, she changed careers to work in International Water Resources, working her way to the Director of the International Water Resources Branch of the US Geological Survey. In this hybrid scientific/political job, she brought together scientists from around the world to find common language and purpose. On 9/11, she was in the Netherlands on a mission for the US, surrounded by international friends anxious for their close friend and her family. She carried these and many, many other deep friendships throughout the rest of her life. In the last decade of her remarkable career, Anna's worked tirelessly to persuade, cajole and sometimes bully Israeli, Jordanian and Palestinian representatives to set aside political and religious animosities through scientific cooperation. Through her efforts and those of her close colleague and friend Bill

Shampine, an important part of the Middle East Peace process saw some of its most enduring successes. It was an incredible achievement for a newly widowed woman with little formal education, setting out on this path with wide success. She was a Midwestern dairy farmer's daughter who as a child milked dozens of cattle twice a day, grew up, moved East and made her mark. She will be missed by friends, colleagues and politicians around the world who were influenced by her genuine caring and compassion and her special gift for bringing people together in the worst of situations. After she retired at age 70, Anna continued caring about the people around her and became a CASA for the Fairfax Courts, helping children caught up in the juvenile legal system, often in cases of abuse and neglect and those in the foster system. She was a stalwart advocate for children for seven years when she decided to devote her remaining energy to travel and her family. Anna's engagement with her community and children took many other forms as well. With two other couples, Anna and Mern mortgaged their home for seed money in 1973 to found the Southwestern Youth Association (SYA) so the neighborhood kids had a safe and constructive place to burn off their energy. She served SYA as Secretary, Quartermaster, and eventually as President. The Association is still going strong today serving local youth in Fairfax County, 13,000 kids and 5,000 families this past year alone. Anna is survived by her beloved and bereaved extended family: her children and their spouses —Tami Lenox and Jim Aiken, Keith and Cheryl Lenox, Kevin and Deb Lenox, and Tracey Lenox and Bill Kelmartin; her grandchildren and their spouses— Marhia Lawing, Jay and Alice Lawing, Shelby and Clint Hackett, Taylor Lenox, Hunter and Renee Lenox, Korey and Katelyn Lenox, Damon Kelmartin, Nick and Trish Kelmartin, and Rachel Kelmartin; and her great grandchildren—Lily, Mary, Lydia and Bodi Shane. All she ever wanted for us was to love one another and to find love for ourselves with a special person. Thanks Meem, for making that the fabric of our lives. The family will hold a private service at Fairfax Memorial Park on October 23 and a wake for family and close friends at our home in Manassas afterwards. Expressions of sympathy can be made via donations to the Johns Hopkins Parkinson's Disease and Movement Disorders Center.

# Cemetery

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## **Fairfax Memorial Park**

9900 Braddock Road

Fairfax, VA, 22032

# Comments

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“ Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Anna Maud Lenox.



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