



Marybeth M. Banks

September 18, 1950 - January 17, 2025

Marybeth M. Banks, 74, died peacefully in her sleep at the home she nurtured and loved for almost 45 years on January 17, 2025, after an 8-year battle with Alzheimer's. She was a devoted and deeply-loved mother, wife, sister and friend.

Marybeth M. Banks was born in Atlanta, GA September 18, 1950 but spent most of her formative years living in Northern New Jersey and at Emma Willard School, an all-girls boarding school in Troy, NY. She is survived by her husband, Charlie Banks, also of McLean, whom she married on May 3, 1980, her son, Robby Banks, of San Carlos, California, her daughter, Liz Banks, of Washington, D.C., and her sister, Jeannette Jordan, of Fort Lauderdale, Florida. She also is survived by her two grandchildren, Austin (6) and Emma (3), and her daughter-in-law Lara Dolan Banks, of San Carlos, California.

Marybeth excelled in academic endeavors from an early age under the watchful eyes of her father, a civil engineer, and her mother, a teacher and, later, college administrator, receiving a BA in Economics, Cum Laude, from Mount Holyoke College in 1972, a Masters in Business Administration from the Wharton School in 1974 and a Masters in Science from the University of Pennsylvania in 1977 associated with the then-emerging field of Social System Sciences. As part of her research in the latter, she, along with five peers and her mentor, Professor Russell L. Ackoff, co-authored "Designing a National Scientific and Technological Communication System." She was gifted in quantitative matters in an era when very few women were pursuing such

endeavors and was delighted to have once been thrown out of a Las Vegas casino thanks to her acumen at card counting.

She was equally successful and interested in the business world. While still in school, she interned one summer at Xerox's headquarters in Rochester, NY, advising programmers on recent technological advances. After completing her academic studies, Marybeth decided to apply her skills and insight to the corporate world, initially working in the first Strategic Planning Department in the railroad industry at Conrail, where she was one of six professional women out of more than 100,000 employees and later overseeing the computerizations of all of Conrail's notoriously complex grain tariffs and then moving to the Corporate Planning Department at AT&T headquarters in Basking Ridge, NJ, working on that company's annual Strategic Plans. After marrying her husband, whom she met at Conrail, she moved to McLean, spending 36 years in Federal Regulatory Affairs, housed in the Law Department of what started as Southern Pacific Telecommunications Company and evolved under several owners to become Sprint and, now, T-Mobile, retiring as Director of Federal Regulatory Affairs.

She was thoughtful, kind, gentle, loving and selfless and had a special way of laughing that made others want to join in. Marybeth loved music, especially the piano. Her 1953 birdseye maple, Kemble, baby grand piano followed her to all her homes throughout her adult life. Growing up playing tennis during summers in Buck Hill Falls, PA, she remained a tennis buff with a fierce forehead, who could hold her own on the court, even when playing with her Tad Davis wooden racquet and her husband against two male opponents in an era when everybody else had migrated to aluminum racquets.

Marybeth's memory will be cherished by everyone who knew and loved her. In lieu of flowers and to honor Marybeth, who was happiest when those she cared for were happy, the family asks that you make a donation to your favorite charity. If you do not have a favorite charity, please consider making a tax-deductible gift to the team that guided Marybeth on her journey by making a check out to Georgetown University, writing in the bottom left corner

“Georgetown Memory Disorders Research Program” and mailing it to Carolyn Ward, Dept. of Neurology, Building D, Suite 177, 4000 Reservoir Road, NW, Washington, D.C. 20057, visit the Georgetown University Medical Center Giving website, choose “Other” under “Direct Your Gift” and in the “Other” box, type “Memory Disorders Program” or call 202 784 6671.

Further information about Marybeth and details about her Celebration of Life to occur on May 10, starting at noon at the Lyon Village Community House in Arlington, Virginia.

Tribute Wall

MC

“ Piano Lessons

Even at an early age, Marybeth's talent at playing the piano was evident. She looked so grown-up sitting on the wooden piano bench, reading the music and bringing it to life from the sheets in front of her. It was just magical to hear her play.

My parents must have told her that I had asked for a piano for my 5th birthday and on one of my stays at her house, she offered to give me a lesson or two. In preparation, she cut strips of white construction paper, labeled them, and carefully placed them on the corresponding keys of their big piano. This was serious business we were about to embark on.

She opened the bench seat and picked out some easy melodies. Then we sat at the piano together. She explained the white and black keys and how the notes were organized according to those slips of paper. She showed me how to position my wrists and hands, how the pedals worked and how applying them could alter the sound by drawing out the notes. She was so patient with me even though I was having difficulty grasping the concepts.

Alas, I had no great talent (nor a piano) but she was always kind, encouraging and never cross with me. Years later, in addition to her many other achievements, I heard that she was now an accomplished pianist.

I hope she has a great piano to use "up there" but it would be even better if she was here with us to play.

Marilyn Cagney - May 07, 2025 at 02:20 PM

“ Some Mischief

In the earlier years of both of our families, we shared a closeness with the Meditz family. Marybeth's mother Betty, was my father's sister. At that time, we all knew Marybeth affectionately as "Twinkie" or Twinkles. I still love that name for her.

On several occasions I stayed at their home in New Jersey while my mother was having one of my brothers or sisters. Twinkie, Jeannie and I would play together, even though they were a little older than I was. Oft times, our Nana would be staying there as well.

Our "Nana" was a bit aristocratic, stern and very fastidious. She was not an easy or loving person to be around. When she discovered that at age 4, I favored my left hand, she said it was the hand of the devil and that I should switch to the right. I can't remember the pearls of wisdom she likely imparted to Twinkle and Jeannie, but I do recall we little cousins huddling together in Twinkle's room whispering mutual tales of Nana's admonishments and quirky behaviors.

Twinkle and I had the job of setting the table every night for dinner. Nana was very proper. Twinkie related that she preferred matching silverware, so we plotted her torture and found the only pieces that did not match. Successful in our mission, we proceeded to set her place.

With great anticipation and our little hands folded angelically as we said grace, we each stole sideway glances to see Nana's reaction. Would she notice? What if we giggled? Nana peered down her long aristocratic nose and conducted her inspection. With great dignity she rose and went to the silverware drawer to find matched replacements. Did she suspect us? Did she figure out that everyone else's silverware was matched? We were mortified yet relieved that we were not under suspicion. The giggles came later.

My recollections of my cousin Marybeth are of a sweet, very accomplished, determined and kind person. But you don't get that far in life without a little mischief in the mix and I will always treasure those moments with her.

Marilyn Cagney - May 01, 2025 at 01:43 PM