



## Sharon Renee Wheeler

April 16, 1939 - March 4, 2024

Heaven gained an angel last Monday,

Sharon Renee Skinner Wheeler (Renee to everyone and Nee to her grandchildren), 84, of Springfield, VA passed away peacefully in her sleep on March 4, 2024, at 12:38pm.

Renee was born on April 16, 1939, to Frances and Harry Skinner in Portsmouth, Ohio. Throughout her entire life she was extremely close to all her mother's family members who mostly lived in Ohio...and several of them were farmers. Renee really was not a "country girl" or a "city girl", she was a "military girl". Renee's father was in the Navy, and she spent many years of her childhood between Norfolk, VA and Gitmo (Guantanamo Bay), Cuba. Most of her favorite childhood memories were of Gitmo and the island of Cuba where she graduated from the 8th grade. She attended high school at Granby High in Norfolk, VA where she met the love of her life, Maurice Julian Wheeler Jr, "Skip". They were high school sweethearts and "Jitterbug" King and Queen. After high school she attended Mary Washington College and graduated in 1961 with a teaching degree from Old Dominion University in Norfolk, VA. While Renee was attending college, Skip was in the Air Force and when home on a short leave in December 1960 he proposed. They later married on July 1, 1961, and began to share their lives together, including 24 moves, for the next 62+ years.

Together, Renee and Skip navigated the anxiety-ridden obligation of being frequently uprooted and moved from one tour of duty to another around the country and the world. Some of the highlights were Biloxi, Mississippi for Skip's first assignment and then to Walker AFB in Roswell, New Mexico where they welcomed their first daughter, Cheryl Lynne Wheeler (Mittelman) in 1963. Then off to Moody AFB in Valdosta, Georgia and welcomed their son, Michael Sean Wheeler, in 1966. In 1969, Jennifer Rae Wheeler (Sprague) came into the world in Aguadilla, Puerto Rico, Ramey AFB.

Between the time in Georgia and Puerto Rico, Skip was flying in Vietnam and Renee refused to remain stateside. Renee ventured to Taiwan with two young ones to be closer to Skip and she and the kids lived in a "military compound" for 15 months during which time Renee was only able to see Skip once a month. Times were rough, however, over the years she shared many fond memories and interesting stories of she and Skip's adventures.

As Skip rose in the officer ranks, so did Renee's responsibilities and commitments. Renee became very involved with many different roles, i.e., preparing for a visit of a two-star general; leading auctions to help pay for the young and enlisted families and their needs; and coordinating a school bus to take food, drink and goodies to those on "alert", primarily to the enlisted. With Renee being out on the flight line and Skip usually being on "alert" most holidays, including Christmas, the family tradition was to have the big family Christmas dinner on Christmas Eve. When pulling alerts became something of the past, she insisted that she would NOT cook again on Christmas, and it stuck. However, her tradition of cooking for "an army" continued during the kid's High School years when she cooked for four days and hosted anyone who would show up for "Smorgasbord" (a buffet of the week's offerings).

Up until the children were born, Renee was an elementary school teacher. Oh,

how she loved her students. After giving birth to Cheryl, Renee devoted her time as a stay-at-home mom and continued her responsibilities as a military officer's wife. Once the children were older, Renee became a substitute elementary school teacher.

Everyone who knew Renee knew she loved to sew. We believe every family member has something she had made from scratch; quilts, dresses, tops, bathing suits, Christening gowns. When Renee and Skip moved to Springfield, VA she started teaching sewing classes at Stretch and Sew and was the lead teacher for many years. Renee was known for giving little gifts "just because" she loved you. So, when she ventured out to start her own sewing/craft business the obvious name was Just Because.

For 42 years, Renee and Skip were members of Sydenstricker United Methodist Church in Springfield, VA. Renee loved to sing in the church choir, and she used her sewing talents to make Christening gowns for infants who passed away too soon. Sydenstricker is a very special church to all the Wheeler family as all three children were blessed to be married by the same ministers, Ed and Libby Wright. Those same ministers came out of retirement to officiate Renee and Skip's renewing of their vows on their 50th wedding anniversary.

We could not have asked for a more loving and devoted wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. We will miss Renee/Mom/Nee every day. Her memory will live on in the hearts of all those who knew and loved her.

Renee is survived by her husband Maurice, "Skip" Wheeler, daughter Cheryl Mittelman (Gar), son Michael Wheeler (Suzanne), daughter Jennifer Sprague (Joe), grandchildren Major USAF Kayla Doescher, Gary Mittelman (Morgan), Abby Mittelman, Bryce Wheeler, Ryan Wheeler, Tony Sprague, Emily Sprague

and great-granddaughter, Aria Doescher.

A memorial service will be held at Sydenstricker United Methodist Church, 8508 Hooes Rd, Springfield VA on August 3 at 2pm. In lieu of flowers, please consider donations to Sydenstricker United Methodist Church. There will be a potluck and fellowship in the church hall following the service. At a later date, Renee will lay to rest at Arlington National Cemetery with Skip. To plant trees in memory, please visit the Sympathy Store.

# Previous Events

## Memorial Service

AUG 3. 2:00 PM (ET)

Sydenstricker United Methodist Church  
8508 Hooes Road  
Springfield, VA