



## **Marleen LaPlant**

1943—2021

Marleen LaPlant entered her eternal rest on July 1, 2021, at Alden Estates of Jefferson. She was born on April 6, 1943, in Fort Atkinson, the daughter of Wilbur and Ella Mae (Brounty) Becker. Marleen lived her entire life in Fort Atkinson, attending grades K-8 in the Town of Oakland's Joeville School, one of four one-room schools in the area. Described as a good student who loved school, she graduated from Fort Atkinson High School in 1961, and subsequently took classes at Whitewater State College.

Marleen met John LaPlant, the love of her life, when they were introduced by his Navy buddy at Deadwood's in Fort Atkinson. John and Marleen were married on July 22, 1972, and resided for a time in Fort Atkinson. They moved back to the family farm and eventually built their current home there. They enjoyed their careers and found time to travel by RV to several states, accompanied by their dogs and a cat called "Punky." As the story goes, Punky was allowed to roam the RV camps at night. When he finished making his rounds, he announced his return with a scratch on the RV roof. Apparently, Punky had Marleen and John successfully trained!

From her childhood on the farm, Marleen maintained a lifelong love of animals. To the delight of those who knew her, she often quipped, "I don't like to dust; I don't like to cook. Just let me go outside with the animals, and I'm happy." She was active in the Jefferson County 4-H program, raising and showing Guernsey cows winning many showmanship awards at county and state levels.

Joining Nasco early in her working career, Marleen was responsible for competitive bidding for large orders and shipping for this international corporation. She actively participated in annual Wisconsin International Dairy Expos in Madison, serving in the Nasco booth for the events. She remained at Nasco for 45 years until her retirement in 2008.

In her leisure time, Marleen pursued activities that kept her in contact with animals and people. She maintained contact with 4-H and often judged events for them. Marleen was also an active member of the Wednesday Night Ladies Bowling League at Rock River Lanes in Fort Atkinson. As with other activities, she took her skills seriously and went to state competitions many times. She ended her bowling career as a Grand Duchess of the sport.

Marleen really enjoyed traveling, taking driving trips with her sister and a longtime friend from Milwaukee. Their travels took them around the United States providing great pleasure from exploring new locations together.

Marleen was involved in conformation dog shows and various dog obedience activities. In addition, she found satisfaction in using her dogs for therapy visits and the public library's Reading to the Dogs program. There was rarely a dog-related event that she missed—Dalmatian national competitions, sheep herding trials, "dancing with dogs" demonstrations, and even weight-pulling contests. Bottom line, she was delighted by "anything dogs."

In 1991, Marleen and two friends, Patty Beran and Rita Hasel, began meeting to train their dogs together. The following year they officially formed The Kennel Club of Fort Atkinson, Inc. (KCFA) and were soon joined by other dog enthusiasts. KCFA is still active today providing dog training classes, public education in responsible dog ownership, and community service projects. KCFA recently honored its founding members by erecting a commemorative statue in Rock River Park, consisting of a canine/human drinking fountain, a combination bench/pedestal, and a bronze statue. On June 15, 2021, Marleen was able to attend the dedication of Puppy Serenade, a bronze statue depicting KCFA's three founding puppies. The day was described by a family member as "the happiest day she's had in years."

Marleen is survived by her husband, John; two brothers, E. G. (Kay) Becker and L. Day (Barbara Jaeckel) Becker; nieces Karen (Scott) Frater and Barbara Deans; nephews, Keith Becker, Kevin (Lori) Becker, Will (Patty) Becker, and John Deans; and cousins Gary Kunz, Lee Cushman, and Tom Brounty.

Marleen was predeceased by her parents; sister Correen Deans; niece Amy Becker; nephew Paul Deans; and her beloved fur-babies Dottee, Mistee, and Stormee.

A celebration of Marleen's life will be held at 11:00 a.m. on Wednesday, July 14, 2021, at St. John's Community Church, N2560 County Trunk J, Fort Atkinson. Visitation will be held at the church from 10:00 a.m. until the time of the service. Burial will take place at the Union Cemetery after the service.

A reception and light lunch will be held following the services at the American Legion Banquet Hall, 201 S. Water Street, East, Fort Atkinson.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to The Kennel Club of Fort Atkinson (KCFA), P.O. Box 205, Fort Atkinson, WI 53538.

*Special thanks to Rainbow Hospice, Alden Estates of Jefferson, C&W Med Rides LLC that graciously stepped forward to transport Marleen to the statue dedication at Rock River Park, and to the many friends and family who provided support for Marleen and John.*

Nitardy Funeral Home is assisting the family.

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