



Mary-Knox Lanier

DEC 12, 1941 - APR 6, 2012



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Mary-Knox Lanier, beloved mother and friend, died suddenly of natural causes on Friday, April 6, 2012. She was preceded in death by her husband, Lee French, and leaves her daughter, Laura Lanier, Laura's partner Wendy Doudrick, and many loving family members and friends. Her warm and compassionate personality, along with her famously joyous laugh, will be missed by the many people she touched in her personal and professional lives. Mary-Knox was born on December 12, 1941, in Winter Haven, Florida, and graduated from Agnes Scott College in Atlanta. After moving to Memphis in 1967 she earned a Master's in Public Administration from the University of Memphis. She worked for the City of Memphis for 30 years in the Office of Housing and Community Development. She was deeply committed to funding housing for the homeless, and she developed numerous programs and protocols to ensure safe housing for the mentally ill homeless. After her recent retirement from the city she continued as interim director for the Community Alliance for the Homeless until retiring in August 2011. Mary-Knox was preceded in death by her parents, James Alonzo Abernethy and Jeannette Forman Abernethy, and her brother, Capt. William Forman Abernethy, who was killed in Vietnam in 1967. She relished her many close relationships with friends, and was especially devoted to her daughter and the step-children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren that she shared with Lee French. Mary-Knox was a member of Calvary Episcopal Church, where she sang in the choir and served on numerous committees. Just a week before her death, she completed a grant application for the Calvary Green Team, whose goal is to make the church more energy efficient. Mary-Knox was also an adventurous traveler, exploring China, the USSR, and many European countries. With her husband Lee she enjoyed many cultural aspects of life in Memphis, and in her brief retirement she became a master gardener and an active member of the Evergreen Garden Club. The family will



Obituary

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receive friends from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. Monday, April 9, 2012 at Memorial Park Funeral Home and Cemetery. Services will be held at 2 p.m. on Tuesday, April 10, at Calvary Episcopal Church, 102 N. Second St. Memphis, TN. A private graveside service will be held. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions can be made to Calvary or to a charity of the donor's choice.



Tribute Wall

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DC

Diane Conner posted:

I would like to extend my deepest sympathy to the family. I had the pleasure of getting to know Mary-Knox while working at the City's Housing and Community Development office. I will always remember her sunny smile and warm personality. She was a great

April 10 at 11:15 AM

JW

Janet Whaley posted:

Ms. Mary-Knox Lanier was a friend to all those living in Memphis and Shelby County, and was a very strong supporter and advocate for those residents who needed "special" help. She was an advocate for the homeless and mentally ill, and always challenged t

April 10 at 10:46 AM

LB

Leigh Ann Blakely posted:

We miss your smile, your laugh and your warmth. You were a special neighbor and friend. We love you, Leigh Ann, Dennis, Joseph and Elizabeth

April 9 at 8:31 AM

PW

Peggy And Jim Williamson posted:

Laura, Jim and I are deeply saddened by the news of your mother's death. We shared so many fun times together with her. We offer our sympathy and support to you and Wendy at this very sad and challenging time for you. You are in our thoughts and praye

April 7 at 3:25 PM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Mary-Knox by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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