



## Janet Marie Kirby

May 2, 1942 - January 1, 2020

Janet (Jan) Kirby of Memphis, Tennessee, passed away on Wednesday, January 1, 2020, at the age of 77. She was born May 2, 1942 in Otsego Township, Wisconsin, to Merritt and Adeline Taylor. She is survived by her husband, Mike Kirby, brother Roger Taylor (Elsie), brother-in-law Bob Kirby (Mary), her son Tom Kirby, (Betsy); her daughter Chris Floyd (Brian), grandchildren Jordan Kirby and Maddie Floyd, and niece and nephews Jody Titus (Dan), Craig Taylor (Paula), Jeff Taylor (Tasha), Tim Kirby (Gaylene), and Jeff Kirby (Geraldine). She loved her Shetland Sheepdog, Frosty, and was a fan of the Green Bay Packers and Memphis Grizzlies.

It was her friendliness and great smile that helped her connect with people in the community through friends and family, V&E Greenline, being a docent at the Memphis Zoo, Garden Club, VECA Community Garden, Italianfest, and her neighborhood. During summers, she was able to make month long trips back to her Wisconsin roots to connect with both family and friends from her college days as well as camp and bike on the many trails.

She loved her grandchildren and they adored her. Jordan's and Maddie's favorite activities with Grandma Jan were creating a variety of arts and crafts, sewing, playing cards, camping, biking, walking along the Mississippi River, feeding the fish at Botanical Gardens and going to the zoo to watch and learn more about all of the animals. Jordan, fourteen years old, and Maddie, eight years old, were blessed to spend most of their Sunday afternoons with Mike and Jan since each was born.

Jan grew up on a dairy farm in rural Wisconsin. She attended a one-room elementary school, Kings Corners, near the family home. She graduated from Fall River High School and then Wisconsin State University at Stevens Point with a major in Home Economics. She taught for three years at Two Rivers Wisconsin and Elgin Illinois. She moved to Memphis, Tennessee, in 1970 and was a long-time resident in the Vollintine Evergreen neighborhood. She received training in computer programming and worked for many years at the Rhodes College Information Service Department in programming and

managed the student computer lab. She was a long-time volunteer for VECA, the neighborhood association, and was one of the original founders and board members of the V&E Greenline trail. She received the Margaret Dichtel Award in 2007 for her volunteerism on the V&E Greenline where she raked, trimmed, planted, weeded, fundraised through a block-long yard sale, had a neighborhood ice cream social, and organized the artists for the annual Artwalk Festival.

Jan was a Zoo docent for many years and was passionate about the animals and teaching facts about them. Her favorite exhibit was Once Upon a Farm, which reminded her of her childhood. She loved the excitement that children, and often adults, had when she shared information with them and Jan always wanted to take more classes to know more about the animals herself. She has passed this love and knowledge of animals on to both grandchildren.

She was also a core volunteer at the VECA Lyndale Community Garden and raised a variety of vegetables and spices. Although she enjoyed the lettuces, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, and okra, basil was her favorite because she made her popular pesto from it. She was also dedicated in removing weeds. She was a fabulous cook and brought with her many of her family's favorite Wisconsin recipes. Our favorites included her pesto, Grandma's barbecue, baked beans, chili soup, tiger bars, Mexican wedding cakes, and cheesy potatoes. She was great at contributing to, throwing, and organizing parties whether they were for Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners, a Packer party for a Super Bowl game, a garden party, ravioli making at Christmas, or docent events at the zoo.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations sent to the V&E Greenline at <https://www.vegreenline.org/> (please note that it is in honor of Jan Kirby) or a check made out to the Memphis Zoo, making a note at the bottom of the check that it is in memory of Jan Kirby for the Docent Program.

The family will receive friends from 5-7 p.m. Friday, January 10th and from 12 p.m. until her service begins at 1 p.m. Saturday, January 11th at Memorial Park Funeral Home and Cemetery.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Memorial Park Funeral Home and Cemetery, 5668 Poplar Ave., Memphis, TN 38119 (901)767-8930 "A Fitting Farewell for Everyone".

# Cemetery

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## Memorial Park Cemetery

5668 Poplar Avenue

Memphis, TN, 38119

# Events

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**JAN** **Visitation** 05:00PM - 07:00PM

**10**

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Memorial Park Funeral Home & Cemetery  
5668 Poplar Ave, Memphis, TN, US, 38119

**JAN** **Visitation** 12:00PM - 01:00PM

**11**

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Memorial Park Funeral Home & Cemetery  
5668 Poplar Ave, Memphis, TN, US, 38119

**JAN** **Funeral Service** 01:00PM

**11**

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Memorial Park Funeral Home and Cemetery  
5668 Poplar Avenue, Memphis, TN, US, 38119

# Comments

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“ An external video has been added.



Memorial Park Funeral Home and Cemetery - January 09 at 07:32 PM

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“ I remember Jan fondly from the family farm days. My parents also always spoke well of her. So sad to learn of her unexpected passing.  
Nancy Gagnon

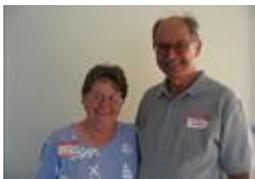
Nancy Gagnon - January 10 at 10:44 PM

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“ Mike,  
Sorry to hear of the untimely death of your best friend Jan. We have fond memories of your courtship at UW-Stevens Point where Jan & Rita were Home Economics majors, you were both involved in Newman Club and Fred was one of your fraternity bothers. We are glad we got to see both you at two of the reunions in the past 10 years. Our sympathies go out to you and your family.

Fred & Rita Straub, Maple Grove MN



Fred & Rita Straub - January 10 at 11:26 AM

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“ All of us at garden club and yoga will miss Jan; I will. What fun the Art Walk on the Green Line! My condolences to Mike and family.

Judith H.

Judith hammond - January 09 at 10:34 AM

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“ I knew Jan through the Vollintine-Evergreen Artwalk for seven years. She was always sweet, very encouraging and helpful to me as well as my family. She greeted us with her big smile and lots of energy. When I visited at her home to paid for my booth, we would talk about different forms of art which would be feature at the Artwalk. I enjoyed being around her; I will miss her greatly.  
Condolences to her family.  
May God Bless each of you!  
Deborah Towns-Armour  
Bee Unique Designers

**Deborah Armour** - January 08 at 12:59 PM

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“ Rhodes College Political Science Department purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Janet Marie Kirby.



**Rhodes College Political Science Department** - January 08 at 12:56 PM

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“ The Dietsche Family from Wisconsin purchased the Medium Dish Garden for the family of Janet Marie Kirby.



**The Dietsche Family from Wisconsin** - January 08 at 12:16 PM

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“ Mike  
I am so saddened to hear of Janet's passing. Have lots of fond memories visiting with her, Roger and her parents as a kid on the farm. And so much appreciated it when the two of you would stop for a visit when you were here visiting your brother. While my mother is not in a place today where she understands what has happened, I know she would send her condolences and remembrances if she could. In particular, I so much appreciated it when you and Janet would visit her and stay and play cards for an afternoon or evening. It meant a lot to her and was part what made Janet special.

I will be in Memphis for Janet's services. I arrive on Friday afternoon so may be able to make the afternoon open house. The entire Miller family sends its condolences.

Michael Miller

Michael Miller - January 06 at 03:24 PM

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“ We were fortunate enough to spend many trips camping with the Kirby family. While sitting around the campfire the friendly badgering with Jan about the Vikings - Packers rivalry was always fun.

We have some great memories ringing in many New Years with Jan and the family.

She truly loved her grandchildren and was always glowing when she was around them.

She will be missed dearly.

Please accept our heartfelt condolences from the Cline family.

Troy Cline - January 06 at 09:24 AM

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“ I knew Jan through the V/E Artwalk; She was always so helpful and always greeted us with a beautiful smile and bubbling energy! We will miss her a great deal.

Condolences to her family and enormous group of friends...

God Bless,

Lynda Davison

Tipton Art League - Covington, TN

Lynda Davison - January 05 at 08:37 AM

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“ Difficult loss for her family and loved ones. I always enjoyed interacting with Jan.  
Your friend Bill Nelson

bill nelson - January 05 at 08:32 AM

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“ Jan was in our life ever since I married Jeff, her nephew. Her care was present every holiday season. Every December, we looked forward to receive her annual box and felt her care and enthusiasm for life in every item she selected for that year's box. Her absence was felt this year already and we will definitely think of her every holiday season and recall how much she loved her family. I hope the memories she

created with those she loved and the care she showered them with, help carry her friends and family through these difficult times. Mike, Tom and Chris, you are in our thoughts and we wish you healing.

**Geraldine Calvo** - January 04 at 09:25 PM

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“ So sorry for your loss. Jan always had a smile and was always interested in the animal news. She was very encouraging and supportive. She will be greatly missed.  
Carol Hesch  
Memphis Zoo

**Carol Hesch** - January 04 at 09:16 PM