



Mary Ellen Van Acker

January 27, 1943 - January 18, 2010

EAST PEORIA – Mary Ellen Van Acker, 66 of East Peoria, died at 4:10 pm Monday, January 18, 2010 at her home. Mary Ellen accepted her lung cancer as part of God's plan and remained a teacher to the end, showing all who knew her, how to die with grace. She never saw the darkness of her illness and looked forward to the bright light knowing she was in God's hands.

She was born on January 27, 1943 in Kewanee, IL to Peter James and Mabel Irene Billiet Van Acker.

Surviving are 1 brother, Lynn (Jill) Van Acker of Princeton, IL, 1 nephew, Brian Van Acker of Chicago, 1 niece Natalie (Brandon) Robbins of Fishers, IN, 1 great-niece, Allison, and a special friend and caregiver, Gail Jacobs of East Peoria, IL.

She was preceded in death by her parents and an infant brother, Gale Anthony.

Mary Ellen was a teacher at Norwood Primary School District #63 in Bellevue, retiring in 2006 after 37 years. After retirement, she continued to work at the school as a remedial reading assistant.

She was a member of Blessed Sacrament Church in Morton, where a funeral

mass will be at 11 am Friday, January 22, 2010. Father Mark DeSutter will officiate. Visitation will be from 5-7 pm Thursday, January 21, 2010 at Deiters Funeral Home and Crematory in Washington, where a rosary will begin at 6:45 pm. Additional visitation will be a half hour prior to the mass. A committal service will follow the mass at Meadow Valley Center in Washington, with cremation rites to follow. Burial of cremated remains will be in St. Patrick's Cemetery in Sheffield, IL at a later date.

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN **22**. 10:30 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church
233 East Greenwood Street
Morton, IL

Service

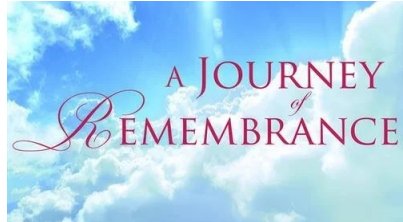
JAN **22**. 11:00 AM (CT)

Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church
233 East Greenwood Street
Morton, IL

Tribute Wall



“ *Deiters Funeral Home & Crematory created a Tribute Video in memory of Mary Ellen Van Acker*



Deiters Funeral Home & Crematory - January 18, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ *dear lynn and family: i knew all the wonderful things about your sister from a past article in the peoria journal star and was sad to read about her passing. my sincere condolences to you all. the "good old days" in sheffield are still strong in my memory. best wishes, bob renner###imported-begin##bob renner###imported-end##*

January 25, 2010 at 12:46 PM



“ *Gail, my thoughts and prayers are with you. I'm so sorry for your loss, and I am really sorry I wasn't able to attend the services. I know how you feel, and I know that you know how I feel. Thinking of you! Love, Sharon###imported-begin##Sharon Lamprecht###imported-end##*

January 24, 2010 at 11:33 AM



“ Gail and family of Mary Ellen,
Mary Ellen has been the most significant person in my life for the past 19 years. She was my mentor and friend. Daily we shared our thoughts and I grew in these moments. Many people walked through her doors, as well, and she always had time to listen. While I know I will never be as great a teacher as Mary Ellen , I am far better than I would have been without her influence. She taught me in teaching and through her illness. This great lady taught me to love life and relish the good things in it. Do not dwell on the negative. Every day was a "good day" and she lifted us all up with her positive spirit. I am so glad Mary Ellen was a part of my life.##imported-begin##Pam Mathus##imported-end##

January 22, 2010 at 09:14 PM



“ I was one of her students and all ways thought she was a great woman. Tyler Frazee##imported-begin##Tyler Frazee##imported-end##

January 21, 2010 at 10:41 PM



“ I grew up across the street from Mary Ellen and Lynn in Sheffield. I idolized and adored Mary Ellen. When I was in first grade, Mary Ellen was a senior and she walked me to school many mornings. She always had a great smile and kind words. A few years ago, I read in the paper she received the Outstanding Teacher of the Year Award. I know she earned and deserved the honor. To Lynn's family and Gail, you are in my thoughts and prayers.##imported-begin##Carol (Schutz) Ferino##imported-end##

January 21, 2010 at 05:33 PM



“ Dear Gail, Our love and prayers go out to you in your time of loss. May you find strength and comfort. Love Butch and Jody##imported-begin##Butch & Jody McDougall##imported-end##

January 21, 2010 at 05:16 PM



“ Sorry to learn of Mary Ellen's passing. I knew Mary Ellen through Gail Jacobs, with whom I shared an office at ICC. I remember chatting often with Mary Ellen as she graded papers while waiting for Gail to return from an evening class. Mary Ellen will be missed!##imported-begin##Bruce Portscher##imported-end##

January 21, 2010 at 04:53 PM



“ I had the unique experience as having MaryEllen as my first grade teacher and my colleague. She has been such a positive example of what a teacher should be. I feel truly blessed to have known her. She enjoyed talking with me about my family that she had known for over 32 years. So many have been touched by her kindness and she will be missed so much. My prayers go out to her family. Julie Boers (Willis)##imported-begin##Julie Boers##imported-end##

January 21, 2010 at 04:30 PM



“ ms. van acker was my first grade teacher, and a great one at that. it is very sad to hear of her passing. i hope all is well with her family and friends. she was a caring, and loveing person and will never be forgotten.##imported-begin##April Staub##imported-end##

January 21, 2010 at 12:04 PM



“ I am so sorry for your loss. My thoughts and prayers go out to Mary Ellen's family. She was a wonderful teacher. Mary Ellen will be missed very much here at Norwood.##imported-begin##Jeri Howell##imported-end##

January 21, 2010 at 09:05 AM



“ I cannot adequately express the respect and admiration I have for Miss Vanacker. I attended Norwood long ago and although many years have passed, I still have fond memories of her. I honestly think of her often; probably because I slouch a little too much. I remember all too well standing in the lunch line and hearing her say: “Stand up straight and keep your shoulders back.” I guess I should have listened.

Two of my children were also lucky enough to have her for first grade. It is impossible to imagine my kids having a better teacher. We still talk about the class watching butterflies come out of their cocoons. Throughout the years my daughter was always excited to see her again, and would profess her fondness each and every time. Her pleasant greetings and wonderful smile always made us feel special. What a wonderful person, she will be greatly missed.##imported-begin##Mark Rupert##imported-end##

January 21, 2010 at 08:35 AM



“ Mrs. Van Acker was my first grade teacher. I'm 20 now so it was a long time ago. But nevertheless, she taught me how to read and write. I will always remember her for the time I spent in her class. I know she is in a better place and I miss her dearly. I'm very sorry for your loss.##imported-begin##Andrew French##imported-end##

January 21, 2010 at 12:06 AM



“ Words can never convey the incredible impact Mary Ellen has had on the students, families, and staff members here at Norwood Primary School. Her upbeat attitude, energy, and commitment has touched so many of our lives -- we were truly blessed to have her as a friend and colleague. We now have a wonderful guardian angel among us!##imported-begin##Sandy Linhart##imported-end##

January 20, 2010 at 03:12 PM



“ Gail, you know we love you. I will miss my mentor and dear friend. She said the day she did not enjoy teaching is the day she would stop, or if we did not need her. I told her we would always need her. As Peg said, God needed her more.

She was simply THE BEST, period!

Our hearts are heavy at Norwood School District, but we know she is organizing things for God. I can't think of a prettier place for MEVA than the Heaven. She so loved the color blue!##imported-begin##Aby Humbles##imported-end##

January 20, 2010 at 02:06 PM



“ Gail, our hearts and prayers go out to you and Mary Ellen's family. I am so sorry I didn't get to visit with her in the last few months, I did get to see her and visit this last fall at Primary. I knew she would be a trooper through this . God needed an angel to help with the children in heaven. Gary and I will send a memorial to Norwood Primary in her honor. We live in Texas 5 months a year now, so we will not be able to attend her service. We will never forget the quality of education she provided for our children. Also Pat and Ray Foltz live here now also and they send their sympathy. With our sincerest sympathy. Gary and Peggy Willis###imported-begin##Gary and Peggy Willis###imported-end##

January 20, 2010 at 12:01 PM



“ Mary Ellen will be missed by everyone! She taught me soooo much but I still had so much more to learn from her. Her family is in my prayers.###imported-begin##Karen Tornquist###imported-end##

January 19, 2010 at 10:04 PM



“ Miss Van Acker loved each and every student who walked through her door. She was a true example of a wonderful teacher who dedicated her entire life to making each student feel as if he/ she was the most important student in her class. She always had a warm handshake or hug whenever she ran into any of her former students. She always asked how they were doing and gave them wonderful words of praise and encouragement. God has really received one of the most remarkable women I have ever had the pleasure of knowing. Your smile will be missed!###imported-begin##Pat Sanford###imported-end##

January 19, 2010 at 08:27 PM