



Dr. Mary Elizabeth Kearns

February 3, 2020

Dr. Mary Elizabeth Kearns
Psychologist and Sex Therapist

Mary Elizabeth Kearns, Ph.D. died at Lancaster General Hospital on February 3, 2020 with her husband, Jon Walker and her beloved attendant, Solomon, by her side. She was born in Brooklyn, NY on December 8, 1943, the daughter of the late Vincent M. Kearns and Elizabeth (Betty) O'Malley Kearns. She grew up in Mineola/East Willis-ton, NY and graduated from Sacred Heart Academy in Hempstead, NY.

Mary received her B.A. in English from Rosemont College in Rosemont, PA, subsequently got her teaching certificate and taught at a private girls' school in Switzerland for one semester. She then found a job in Germany working for the French Army and spent her free time traveling around Europe.

Following her return to the United States, she moved to Chicago where she also taught school. She married Brian P. Condron, M.D., and had three children in very short order, twin boys and thirteen months later her daughter. Mary literally came home from the hospital on her second wedding anniversary with her third baby.

She moved to Lancaster in 1973 and subsequently received her master's degree in psychology from Millersville University while raising her children. She completed an internship at the former St. Joseph Hospital and then was employed by the hospital in their Mental Health Unit. When the hospital and several physicians decided to start a Sex Therapy program in the 1980s Mary was asked to be involved. She educated herself by taking several related courses and eventually began working on her doctoral degree. She and Brian divorced during this time. Mary Kearns and Jon G. Walker, M.D. were wed on May 19, 1990 and have enjoyed nearly 30 years of marriage at the time of her death. She received her Ph.D. in Human Sexuality from the University of Pennsylvania in 1991. She and the late David Nutter, M.D. practiced Psychology and Sex Therapy together for many years with offices in the Griest Building. She loved her practice but had to eventually give

it up for health reasons. Mary was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in 1994 but continued to practice until 1999. In the years since she has remained active and involved in the community with her husband. They have enjoyed membership in the Hamilton Club where they were members of the Mahjong Club and attended monthly dinner meetings of the Hamilton Club Downtowners. She also belonged to the Lancaster Downtowners, was on the Board of the Lancaster Marionette Theatre and was a founding member of the WUGGs (Women United for Good Government), a group of like-minded Democratic women who meet monthly to discuss the political problems of the U.S. Over the years Mary and Jon have been ardent supporters of the Fulton Opera House, the Ware Center, the Lancaster Symphony Orchestra, United Disabilities Services and, most recently, the Lancaster County Children's Alliance.

Dr. Mary was an independent woman who knew her own mind and was an excellent therapist as a result. She saw things clearly and advised without hesitation. She has been loved by many patients and friends alike and will be missed by all. She lived her life with dignity and grace and managed the ravages of her illness without complaint.

Mary is survived by her husband, Jon G. Walker, M.D., her twin sons, Todd B. Condrón (Kristen McGraw) of Norfolk, VA and Sean B. Condrón of Las Vegas, NV, her daughter, Dr. Erica Kearns Wentzel (Matthew) of Lancaster and step-sons, Christopher J. Walker (Jennifer Baber) of Mountville and Benjamin G. Walker of Lancaster. She is also survived by grandchildren: Isabelle Wentzel, Luke Wentzel, Adam Wentzel, and Paige Mary Condrón plus step-granddaughters, Margaretta (Maggie) Walker and Laura Claire Walker. Of special note, she leaves behind her beloved attendant, dear friend and "adopted" son, Solomon Gesesew, his wife, Sndayo Asresu and daughters, Rahwa and Eden Tesfay. Solomon has been part of the family for ten years.

Additional survivors include brothers, Vincent E. Kearns (Barbara) of Smithtown, NY, Robert Kearns (Cathy) of Savannah, GA and Richard P. Kearns (Maureen) of East Williston, NY plus numerous cousins, nieces and nephews on Long Island and in Philadelphia and New Jersey.

Relatives and friends are invited to Mary's Celebration of Life Service at The Groffs Family Funeral Home, 528 W. Orange Street, Lancaster, PA on Monday, February 10, 2020 at 11:00 a.m. The family will receive friends for a Viewing at 10:00 a.m. until the time of service. Private family interment.

Memorial donations in Mary's name may be made to UDS Foundation, 2270 Erin Court, Lancaster, PA 17601 or Fulton Theater, 12 N. Prince St., Lancaster, PA 17603.

Events

FEB **Visitation** 10:00AM - 11:00AM

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The Groffs Family Funeral & Cremation Services Inc.
528 West Orange St., Lancaster, PA, US, 17603

FEB **Celebration of Life** 11:00AM

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The Groffs Family Funeral & Cremation Services Inc.
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Comments



My Dear Momma,

I remember the first time I met you back in 1993 I had butterflies in my stomach. Erica and I had made the 6 hour trek from Pittsburgh to visit you and Jon at this place called "The Bayhouse". It was a beautiful evening and the Sun was starting to set. As we pulled up on the back country farm path, I wondered what you would be like as I knew Erica was very special and talked about you so often, not only as a great Mom, but also as her best friend. It was a little intimidating. We walked down the wooden steps to the middle deck overlooking the Chesapeake Bay. You and Jon were both enjoying a glass of wine. As I greeted both of you, it became very clear where Erica got her beautiful looks. Mary, you and Jon welcomed me with gracious arms. I do remember feeling this sense of awe at a women who was so self assured, intelligent, driven, matter-of-fact and well, a Psychologist! Could a young guy like me "meet your standards" for your daughter Erica?

Well, as it turned out, all I had to do was love and respect your daughter and always put her first...which came naturally to me as I knew that she would be the one I would marry someday. Over the past 27 years, I loved you like my own Momma. I enjoyed all of ours times together, our private talks (some you could have billed me for) our vacations, celebrations, and Erica and I creating a family that eventually brought you joy as a Grandma to Isabelle, Luke and Adam. I will always hold you in the highest regard as someone who didn't complain, despite your physical challenges, which never defined who you were.

You will always hold a special place in my heart. Living with and loving Erica reminds me of you as a driven and successful women who wants to make a difference in her part of the world by helping others, whether it be her patients or students. Don't worry Momma, you are living on in our hearts and minds. Thank you so much for bring Erica into this world and for your beautiful contribution to our lives.

Rest in Peace. I love you.

Matt aka "Son"

Matthew Wentzel - February 15, 2020 at 05:22 PM



Jon and Family -

I don't know what words to say to you that might help you through this difficult time - I can only say that I am so sorry for your loss and that I am thinking about you all.

Sincerely, Becky Brown

Becky Brown - February 10, 2020 at 10:01 AM



“ I was fortunate to know Mary from the time when she was an excellent psychologist and sex therapist, through the years of her disability as M.S. robbed her of her physical abilities. I was consistently impressed by the grace and fortitude she demonstrated in dealing with the pain and limitations her illness caused. She was truly a remarkable woman.

Larry Bieber

Larien G Bieber - February 10, 2020 at 08:22 AM



“ Our sincere condolences to John and the family. Mary was a bright, caring and strong woman who took life as it came. We were lucky to know her.
Dan and Regina Kegel

regina kegel - February 10, 2020 at 01:21 AM



“ Mary was a friend and colleague. Always willing to help
Dr john and karen palumbo.

John and karen palumbo - February 09, 2020 at 08:36 PM



“ My thoughts are with the family of this amazing woman, a woman who will be missed by so many. As a founding member of the WUGGs, Mary Kearns was a strong advocate of good government and a supporter of women running for office. Women like me who ran for public office much appreciated her interest and support. Lois Herr

Lois Herr - February 09, 2020 at 08:02 AM



“ Beautiful Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of Dr. Mary Elizabeth Kearns.



February 08, 2020 at 02:41 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Dr. Mary Elizabeth Kearns.



February 08, 2020 at 09:37 AM



“ Mary was my roommate at Rosemont College (Class of '65) and has been one of my dear friends ever since. Those were the days (maybe still are) when the college would let us know who our roommates would be before we arrived for our first semester of freshman year. Addresses were included, so Mary and I wrote back and forth (she probably wrote the first letter, she was much more forthright than my shy self). We could tell it would be a good match because we both believed it was essential that we start the toothpaste tube from the bottom up, never in the middle. I soon learned that Mary was willing to follow the rules (and there were plenty) as long as they didn't inconvenience her too much. I loved that. Our getaway was to go down to the Mari-Nay restaurant, now long gone, and croon over their fabulous warm cinnamon buns.

Mary had beautiful dark brown hair, almost shoulder-length, and one day she asked if I would trim it for her. Sure, I said. So I started on one side with the scissors and worked my way along the back and around to the front again. Except the sides didn't match, one was longer than the other. I went to correct that by going around again. Same result. And again, until finally I was satisfied. The trouble was, I had taken off at least two inches in the process. Mary stood before the mirror with tears in her eyes, combing and combing as if eventually she could make it long again. She was not thrilled with me.

Our lives after graduation took us to many different places, but we never lost our connection. When Mary got the diagnosis of MS, she soldiered on. The last time I visited her (a year ago? It has been too long), it was clear that despite her physical difficulties, she was still herself, the beautiful woman I loved and admired. She was brave, she had her same sense of humor, she was interested in and supported so many good causes and the arts, and happily we both had the same political opinions, so there was not a chance of a fight.

Enjoy yourself where you are now, Mary. And I am absolutely sure that your spirit will take care of the family you love. The veil is very thin.

Love,
Susan

Susan Ellison Burke - February 07, 2020 at 11:56 PM



“ Kearns family,

We are so sorry for the loss of your dear sister, Mary.
Sending hugs and prayers. Don and Jean

Jean Sc Schroeder - February 07, 2020 at 01:05 PM



“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Dr. Mary Elizabeth Kearns.



February 05, 2020 at 06:14 PM



“ Gifty and Malachy Kearns Of Connemara Galway. Ireland Send deep Condolences to All Marys Family. Gifty still laughs often as she remembers at 3am Mary was still tuned into more dancing and stories at a Wedding on LI in 2007. Gifty always says Mary sure knows how to laugh and have real fun ,, with no end ,,, . We say ‘ Beir Bua ‘ to Lively Lovely Loving Mary RIP A big Hug from Clifden. Connemara.

malachy & Gifty Kearns - February 05, 2020 at 05:48 PM



“ the UDS Foundation Family purchased the Adoration Casket Spray for the family of Dr. Mary Elizabeth Kearns.



the UDS Foundation Family - February 05, 2020 at 04:49 PM



“ The AI Board of Directors & the AE & ILS Staff purchased the Sentiments of Serenity Spray for the family of Dr. Mary Elizabeth Kearns.



The AI Board of Directors & the AE & ILS Staff - February 05, 2020 at 04:45 PM



“ We have so many wonderful memories of Aunt Mary growing up and through the years.
She was a strong woman and will be missed. Those we love are never really gone and she is at peace. Sending Erica, Todd and All the Family our loving thoughts and prayers.
Much Love, Noelle Condron-Zuccarello

Noelle Zuccarello - February 05, 2020 at 02:07 PM



“ Dr Walker so sorry for your loss

Danielle Pannebecker - February 05, 2020 at 01:05 PM



“ Michael Condron & Family purchased the Joyful Memory for the family of Dr. Mary Elizabeth Kearns.



Michael Condron & Family - February 05, 2020 at 12:43 PM



“ Guiding Light Bouquet was purchased for the family of Dr. Mary Elizabeth Kearns.



February 05, 2020 at 12:00 PM



“ What a blessing it has been to know Mary for so many years. As neighbors and friends throughout her life, raising children together and supporting the arts. This is a better community because she lived in it and she will be missed. Jon I will never forget the day you shared her diagnosis with me, you have both been role models of how to deal with MS. We send much love to the whole family as we will not be available for the service. May all of the good memories & God's love carry you through these coming weeks and months.

Susan & John Garofola

Susan Garofola - February 05, 2020 at 07:41 AM



“ From Joy (Jarrett) and Charles Carnahan purchased the Beautiful Heart Bouquet for the family of Dr. Mary Elizabeth Kearns.



From Joy (Jarrett) and Charles Carnahan - February 04, 2020 at 07:57 PM



“ Love's Journey was purchased for the family of Dr. Mary Elizabeth Kearns.



February 04, 2020 at 07:53 PM



“ Medium Dish Garden was purchased for the family of Dr. Mary Elizabeth Kearns.



February 04, 2020 at 07:36 PM