



Elaine A Fahrner

August 2, 1949 - November 11, 2014

Elaine A. Fahrner, devoted friend, partner, sister, and educator-extraordinaire lost her battle with cancer on November 11, 2014. Elaine was 65 years young. She was, as always, surrounded by friends who loved her dearly.

Elaine was born August 2, 1949 in Rushville, Indiana to her proud parents, Charles and Evaleah, who preceded her in death. She went to Ball State after graduation – a band geek with a big future. She knew she could change the world by helping children believe in their potential, so she became a teacher.

She taught in the Aleutian Islands, Alaska - which was quite a feat for someone who hated to fly - then settled in Nashville at Glendale Middle School. Many grateful children remember her classroom as a fun and creative place to learn. Elaine was often hailed in grocery stores and restaurants around Nashville - “Ms. Fahrner!” – and she would look into their faces and see their 10 year old selves. She would search her memory and recall their names and their smiles, and she would congratulate them on who they had become. Once they walked away, she sometimes said “that kid was a mess!” She obviously fixed them all.

Elaine went on to teach at East Literature and Martha Vaught Middle School, where she eventually became principal. Metro schools then made a decision that would impact the dreams and ambitions of hundreds of Nashville students

when they gave Elaine the opportunity to fulfill her own dream of opening a non-traditional high school for Nashville students. The Academy at Old Cockrill has been creating second chances for at-risk kids since 2009 by offering inspired, and inspiring, alternative curriculum to students who have not otherwise been able to earn a diploma. Elaine had found her place – and in doing so, she helped so many others find theirs. She gathered together other educators who believed in her vision, and together they changed our world by guiding their students in reaching their potential. Ask anyone who went to Old Cockrill about Ms. Fahrner and they will tell you that she believed in them – every single one.

When she wasn't changing lives at work, she was changing her golf score. We don't want to say that she shaved strokes – that would be a lie – but she did win a lot. She loved golf because it was a challenge, but mostly because she got to spend time with friends and have beverages delivered right to her cart. For 10 years, she and her dear friend Suzanne Bradford hosted the Fahrford golf tournament - a coveted, invitation-only, best-ball scramble. An invitation to the Fahrford signaled your arrival – not necessarily to the golfing elite, but to the elite world of special friends and extraordinary fun.

Elaine is survived by her partner/spouse Cindy Dempsey, sister Juli and her partner Tammy Hope and their daughter Kati, brother Greg and his wife Becky and their daughter Aimee Jo, her in-laws Jean and Ben Dempsey, Cheryl Dempsey, Ben and Sarah Dempsey and their daughters Elizabeth (Luke) and Paige.

Elaine's natural story-telling ability was well-known, with a delivery that was deliberate, embellished and perfectly timed. She loved her mother's deviled eggs made with candied dill pickles. She loved her friends – relationships maintained over many years and in numbers too many to mention (but you know who you are). Elaine never failed to mesmerize a crowd – we were all

captivated students to her knowledge and wit. She leaves a hole as big as her personality and as deep as her loyalty. She will be missed beyond words.

Near the end, Elaine said this: "I lived a life with no regrets. I was able to start the school of my dreams and I married the love of my life". What more could you ask?

In lieu of flowers, the family request donations be made to The Academy at Old Cockrill (please send with a letter requesting that your donation be used for Graduation or Staff Development) and ReNew at the YWCA of Middle Tennessee. Memorial Service will be held on Friday, November 21st, 4:30 pm at the Academy at Old Cockrill, 610 49th Avenue North, Nashville 37209.

Tribute Wall



“ *Elaine A Fahrner*

January 28, 2023 at 12:19 PM



“ *Dottie Clevenger lit a candle in memory of Elaine A Fahrner*



Dottie Clevenger - December 07, 2014 at 09:36 PM