



Carolyn Torbett Smith

NOV 6, 1930 - JUL 16, 2012



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SMITH, CAROLYN TORBETT passed away in Austin on July 16, 2012 after a two year battle with non-smoker's lung cancer. She lived a life of service to her family, friends, and especially people in need. Born in Waco on November 6, 1930 to William C. Torbett II and Viola Emerson Torbett, Carolyn and her younger brother Bill grew up in Romayor, Austin and Dallas. Her family's life took an abrupt turn in her early teens, when her father suffered a brain tumor that left the A&M graduate no longer able to work. Her mother took in boarders and Carolyn and Bill went to work. Carolyn graduated valedictorian of her class from Woodrow Wilson High School in Dallas in 1947, and in 1951 earned her BA in Spanish from what was then Texas State College for Women (now Texas Women's University). Until the very end of her life, she remained close to the best friends she made in high school and college. On February 23, 1952, Carolyn married Forrest Gilbert Smith, her beloved husband of 41 years, after a courtship that began at Wilshire Pharmacy where she worked and he ate lunch, around the corner from the Wilshire Television shop he ran until he retired. While raising their two daughters, Laura and Nancy, near White Rock Lake in Dallas, Carolyn went to work as the first lay teacher at Nancy's school, Notre Dame Special School, and later became principal of the Notre Dame Vocational School, teaching work skills to teens and young adults with developmental disabilities. While teaching, Carolyn return to TWU and earned her MA in Special Education. Throughout her life Carolyn was a devout Episcopalian and deeply involved in her church communities. She was an active member of the Church of the Incarnation in Dallas from high school until she moved to Austin, teaching Sunday School, teaching English to Spanish speaking church neighbors, and serving as the first woman on the vestry. She maintained close lifelong relationships with the friends she made at the Incarnation, including her beloved Bridge Club that has stayed together as close friends from the time the wives met each other as high



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school girls at church. When Carolyn moved to Austin in 1994 to be close to her grandchildren after her husband's death, she joined All Saints Episcopal Church and quickly became involved in its community. She devoted her energy and time to All Saints' Loaves and Fishes, Micah 6, Daughters of the King, and Adult Christian Education, as a church office volunteer, as a vestry member in the last year of her life, and to trying to be of service people she met through All Saints in any way she could. She cherished the close Austin friendships she made at the church. It was through the Episcopal Church that she was also able to fulfill one of her life's dreams; at the age of 70, she taught English in at the Episcopal School in Villanueva, Honduras. Carolyn was active in Dallas and Austin communities outside the church, including the ARC (formerly called Association for Retarded Citizens), Austin's Paramount Theatre volunteer ushers, the Texas Women's University alumni association, El Buen Samaritano, and Meals on Wheels, which she delivered until 6 weeks before her death when she was already on oxygen. But her work through charitable organizations was only a small bit of her life of service; she never passed up a need without trying to do something about it – helping newly immigrated families get situated, assisting people who were homeless, ex-inmate, impoverished, disabled, or in just plain difficult circumstances of life in any way she could, even picking up trash every time she went on a walk. Funeral and reception to be held at 2:00 pm Friday, July 20, at All Saints Episcopal Church, 209 West 27th, Austin. Graveside service and reception to be held at 11:00 am, Saturday, July 21, at Restland Memorial Park, 13005 Greenville Avenue, Dallas.



Memories only last if you share them

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