



Audrey Ann Malena

June 27, 1945 - June 23, 2020

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In lieu of flowers, please send gifts in support of the Labyrinth at First Central Congregational United Church of Christ www.firstcentral.org.

Audrey Ann Malena (née Motycka), 74, of Elkhorn, NE, passed peacefully in her sleep on Tuesday, June 23, 2020, following a long battle with dementia. Her daughter and son-in-law were present with her via video link. She was preceded in death by parents Meta and Emil Motycka, daughter Rachel Malena Donahue and brother Thomas Motycka. She is survived by spouse Daryl of Elkhorn, NE; daughter Sarah Malena, son-in-law Donald Wallace, and grandsons Nathan and Evan Malena Wallace of Leonardtown, MD; son-in-law Michael Donahue of Elkhorn, NE; sister Muriel Kaes of Denver, CO; brother Lyle of Longmont, CO and spouse Jenny; sister-in-law Janet Johnson of Gretna, NE and brother-in-law Michael Malena and spouse Joy of Leigh, NE; along with eleven nieces and nephews.

Audrey's childhood was mostly spent in Leigh, Nebraska. When she was six she was paired with a seven year old boy in the Memorial Day parade. She

fell in love with the shy boy in the brown tweed sport coat. She did not see him again because she went to school in town, and he went to a country school. Later Audrey's family moved to Buffalo, New York where Audrey spent her remaining elementary and junior high school years. The family returned to Leigh when she was in high school. Audrey and Daryl began dating before he realized that she was the pretty girl in the lime green dress that he had fallen in love with on Memorial Day years earlier at the cemetery.

Audrey and Daryl were married in 1964 while she was an undergraduate and he was in dental school at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln. Rachel was born in 1971 and Sarah in 1974. Following her marriage to Michael Donahue, Rachel developed a rare form of leukemia and required a bone marrow transplant. Sarah was her donor. Rachel died in 1994 and Mike chose a burial plot at the Leigh Cemetery that happens to be the very site where Audrey and Daryl met. The story can be found in the "How We Met" series (Nov. 22, 2014) in the Omaha World Herald. Audrey loved her family and almost all of her spare time and vacations were focused on visiting family members throughout the country.

Audrey was active in professional and volunteer activities throughout her life. She earned a bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Development and a Master's degree in Marriage and Family Therapy. She focused especially on family therapy, spirituality, and grief counseling. Audrey had her own private practice and served as a professional mediator. She also led spirituality and grief workshops, was active in the Omaha chapter of Compassionate Friends, and was a Certified Labyrinth Facilitator. She and Daryl collaborated in the creation of the Labyrinth at First Central Congregational Church in Omaha, where Audrey was an active church member.

A private memorial service will be held for close family. A Celebration of Life service will be scheduled at a later time.

Tribute Wall



“ *Reichmuth Funeral Home created a Webcast in memory of Audrey Ann Malena*



Reichmuth Funeral Home - June 24, 2020 at 06:41 PM

DK

"With just one more surprise." I love this hymn, and it was wonderful to hear it read.

Deb Kirwan - June 26, 2020 at 12:10 PM

AH

Daryl, I don't know if you'll remember me, but we were at First Central together for some years. I remember Audrey as an intelligent, caring, and spiritual person--one who gave of herself to help others. May God give you His peace and comfort at this time.
Ardys Hansum

Ardys Hansum - June 26, 2020 at 03:14 PM

PF

Lovely service. Reading the lyrics to the hymns was powerful and beautiful. Daryl, I will never forget meeting you and Audrey at a TCF meeting just a few days after our daughter died. Audrey introduced me to my lap Labyrinth. The Labyrinth remains a soothing tool of meditation for me. I send condolences to you, all the family, and to her many dear friends. *Pamela Finley*

Pamela Finley - June 26, 2020 at 06:24 PM

DD

Daryl, you and Audrey both had an impact on my spiritual life at First Central in the 1980s and 1990s. I remember you leading one or two spiritual retreats I attended. For me, Audrey had a tremendous presence at church. She was someone I noticed in social hour as almost lighting up the room as she moved through it. It was easy to see how spiritual she was, and how caring, compassionate, and kind. She always had nice, encouraging words for others, and a very gentle, almost ethereal, presence about her. My condolences and love to you and your family. Deb Derrick

Deborah Derrick - June 26, 2020 at 08:34 PM



“ Audrey Ann Malena

December 10, 2022 at 09:12 AM

EI

“ Daryl, It is hard to imagine you without Audrey. You two were always a pair and a great pair at that. I don't have to tell you that your faith will get you through this as you have already been through something similar. God bless you and your family. May God hold you in the palm of His hand.

Eileen - June 30, 2020 at 07:07 PM

VM

“ *Daryl and Family: I am so sorry for your loss. I will always recall my growing up years and high school days with great fondness and joy because of my community and my classmates. Audrey was one of my best and dearest friends. We shared so many great times. I remember those days with such gratitude for having known Audrey. Her kindness and spirit will always live on.*

Vicki Mackenstadt

Daryl: I also loved my years at District 20 and living across the way from the Malenas. So many, many wonderful memories.

Vicki Mackenstadt - June 28, 2020 at 04:40 PM

SD

“ Audrey and I met during the '80s when we were pursuing our Master Degrees at UNL. There were a few of us that took a Wellness Class together and became very good friends. When the semester was over, we didn't want to lose touch with each other so we continued to meet monthly and called ourselves "the Wellness Connection". We even had t-shirts made and went on several trips together. It was during this time thru the years that Audrey became one of my best friends and our husbands joined us sometimes too, so they became friends also.

So this message is about both Audrey and Daryl from Sharon and Dan Duffy. You both are such wonderful caring and compassionate people, we feel very blessed to call you our Friends. Our Wellness Connection Circle is broken now with the loss of our Dear Audrey, but the love and friendship between all of us will remain forever. We have shared many life experiences together, fun and sad. Especially sad, upon the loss of dear Rachael.

There are so many stories I could tell, but the most important one is the Wonderful Memories we have of our Dear Audrey.

And Daryl and Sarah and her family, you will be in our thoughts and prayers daily and I do believe your strong spiritual faith will carry you through, knowing that Audrey and Rachel are together now and that you will join them when the Lord calls you home.

Our love to each of you.

Thank you also for the beautiful service you planned for Audrey.

*In God's Love and Friendship,
Dan and Sharon Duffy*

Sharon Duffy - June 27, 2020 at 05:37 PM



“ *My beautiful Aunt Audrey. I've literally known you all my life. Your words of encouragement, faith, support, and enlightenment gave me the courage to become who I am. Getting to spend the summer of 76 with you and Daryl and the girls was such a coming of age for me, let alone a chance to experience MUSC, Charleston, and the South.*

Love and Peace

Jeff

Jeff Kaes - June 26, 2020 at 12:51 PM



“ *What an absolutely beautiful service to celebrate a beautiful woman. Knowing Sarah for over 40 years, I have seen the love and kindness that Audrey showed everyone and see so much of her in Sarah. Daryl and Audrey have set such an amazing example for others. I am thankful for being able to see the joy of Audrey enjoying her grandsons the last time I saw her and my thoughts and prayers are with all of Audrey's family and friends.*

Jill Cross - June 26, 2020 at 12:34 PM

CG

“ Audrey and I met in Lincoln while pursuing our Master's Degrees. She became one of my very best friends. Along with a small group of girls from our graduating class, we would meet monthly and on Christmas holidays with our husbands. Aside from occasional couples merriment at El Bee's we would meet for an annual birthday luncheon, as my birthday is on June 24th and hers is June 27th. Following lunch we would share one hot fudge sundae using two spoons. In her honor tomorrow I will be having a hot fudge sundae-across from an empty spoon. Audrey was funny, articulate and introspective. I will miss her gentle presence.

Carolyn Godfrey

Carolyn Godfrey - June 26, 2020 at 10:41 AM

BS

“ Daryl, I am so sorry about Audrey's passing. She was a wonderful lady that I always enjoyed visiting with at the Perio parties. I could see the Love between you two and her Love for her family. I am sending my Love, Prayers, and Thoughts to comfort you at this very difficult time. God Bless. Betty J. Shestak



Betty J. Shestak - June 26, 2020 at 10:34 AM

TW

“ My love goes out to my family. I will always picture her holding her grandchildren and the pride she had for them. Sarah always share her with Nathan and Evan. And of course I cant wait to be with you and hear all your memories as well. Love you Terri

Terri Wallace - June 26, 2020 at 10:18 AM

DH

“ Do sorry to learn of this. My deepest condolences to Daryl and her family. Don Hammond

Don Hammond - June 25, 2020 at 11:56 PM

GW

“ Through the more than twenty five years I have enjoyed sharing with Audrey personally and professionally I always knew the caring, loving, and thoughtful person she was. Yes I recall once our meeting for lunch and the noise in the restaurant was so loud we decided to have our food boxed. We went to car to further eat our lunch and share with each other without screaming.. Audrey always exemplified a deeply spiritual compassion to others. Her providing therapeutic services to clients reflected that genuineness, competence, and devotion to their welfare. Devoted to her family her daughters, the sad loss of Rachael, and Sarah's many successful accomplishments along with her and Don's grandsons was always foremost in her love and concerns for them. I will ever remember Audrey. She was a special gift to me and so many others. . Dr Gwen Weber

Gwen Weber - June 25, 2020 at 07:39 PM

JJ

“ My last memory of Audrey is when I went with Daryl to visit her at Esprit. She was so happy to see us. Her dementia caused her to be repetitive, and what she repeated over and over was I love you, I love the boys (her grandsons). There is a recent photo of her with another resident at Esprit, sitting outdoors, and she is smiling.

Janet

Janet Johnson - June 24, 2020 at 09:28 PM