



Marilyn "Frankie" Margaret Kirkwood

February 7, 1931 - December 19, 2025

Marilyn Margaret Kirkwood, known to her many friends as “Frankie”, was born in Sioux City, Iowa on February 7, 1931. She was raised by Hanna “Nora” and George Gilman and graduated from Sioux City Central High School in 1948. Frankie enjoyed her high school years as a cheerleader and member of a group of friends affectionately known as the “Neglected Nine.” In April 1952 she traveled to Dow AFB in Bangor, ME, where she married the love of her life, Jack Kirkwood. The couple honeymooned at Bar Harbor and the surrounding Acadia National Park. Maine was in her heart from that point on. After Jack completed his military service, the couple returned to Sioux City and started a family. The next 66 years took them to cities across the Midwest including Sioux City, Iowa City, Denver, Kansas City, Springfield (IL), Chicago, Omaha (twice), Des Moines (twice), Fargo and Valley.

Motherhood was a labor of love for Frankie, raising five children and still finding time to be involved in church and community activities. She volunteered for schools, Girl and Boy scout troops, Alter Society, Family Ministry and enjoyed a group of close friends in her “Birthday Club.” As a member of St. Robert’s parish in Omaha she was active in the early days of Essential Pregnancy Services. Frankie was honored by the University of Nebraska Omaha for her service to the community as a “Woman of Wisdom” in 2010. She was named one of the “25 Outstanding Women of the Year” in 1994 by the Urban Council of Catholic Women.

As the nest emptied and Jack retired, Frankie was able to have a career

outside of the home. Continuing volunteer activities, she enrolled in the College of St. Mary and took on the job of Assistant Volunteer Coordinator at Immanuel Hospital in Omaha. While caring for her aging mother and mother-in-law, Frankie later began working as the Activities Director at Valhaven nursing home in Valley.

Frankie was an avid reader and lover of books. Her life-long dream of working in a library became reality in 2002. Later that year, she was named Head Librarian at the Valley Public Library. During her tenure, she modernized the library operations and services, resulting in increased patronage and re-engaged the "Friends of the Library." She was integral in acquiring the Bank of Valley main branch building in downtown Valley and coordinated the move to that location where the Valley Library operates to this day.

Frankie enjoyed her friends, volunteering and the various communities where she lived, especially Ginger Cove. Jack and Frankie always wanted to live on a lake and in 1978 that dream came alive. She loved the close community at Ginger Cove making many friends, especially the "Wine Girls" who support and look out for each other each and every day.

Jack and Frankie were also active members of the St. John's Catholic Church in Valley.

Frankie was preceded in death by her husband, Jack; Parents Nora and George Gilman; Half-siblings Stan Gilman, Eileen (Gilman) Royce and Ralph Gilman; Brother- and Sister-in-law Don and Nancy Kirkwood. She is survived by her five Children: Lynn (Randy) Pettit of Clive, IA; Betsy (Kim) Elder of Paxton, NE; John (Lisa) Kirkwood of Eagan, MN; Mike (Lisa) Kirkwood of Big Horn, WY; Dave (Candi) Kirkwood of Omaha; and Cheryl Hamilton of Hudson, WI. Twelve Grandchildren: Ryan (Kelly) Pettit of Johnston, IA; Abbey (Chad) Gilroy of Johnston, IA; Andy (Amanda) Elder of Neligh, NE; Tyler Pettit of Des Moines, IA; Colby (Jenna) Pettit of Adel, IA; Matt (Motika) Elder of Hershey, NE; Katie (Devin) Mueller of Lincoln, NE; Kelsey (Hannah) Westwood of South St. Paul, MN; Jessie (Aaron) Boettger of Hudson, WI; Michaela (Nathan) Westlund of River Falls, WI; Sydney Kirkwood of Milwaukee, WI; and

Jack Kirkwood of Omaha, NE. Great Grandchildren Taylor and Mason Pettit; Harrison and Nolan Gilroy; Hannah and Ali Elder; Mackenzie, Ava Kate and Kaci Pettit; Beckett, Blakely and Baylor Elder; Lyla and Carson Boettger. Nieces Kyra, Kirstan, Molly, Melissa. Nephews Cris, Curt, Stan, Rick and Bill. Funeral Mass will be held Tuesday, December 30 at 10:30 AM, St. John's Catholic Church in Valley. Interment will be held at 2:30 in the afternoon at Omaha National Cemetery. Visitation will be Monday, Dec. 29 from 5-7 PM with a Wake service at 7 PM at St. John's. Memorials may be made to the Make-A-Wish Foundation or the St. Vincent de Paul Society of Omaha.

Cemetery Details

Omaha National Cemetery

14250 Schram Road
Omaha, NE 68138

Previous Events

Visitation

DEC **29**. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

St. John's Catholic Church
307 East Meigs Street
Valley, NE 68064

Wake Service

DEC **29**. 7:00 PM (CT)

St. John's Catholic Church
307 East Meigs Street
Valley, NE 68064

Mass of the Christian Burial

DEC **30**. 10:30 AM (CT)

St. John's Catholic Church
307 East Meigs Street
Valley, NE 68064

Graveside Service

DEC **30**. 2:30 PM (CT)

Omaha National Cemetery
14250 Schram Road
Omaha, NE 68138

Tribute Wall



“ *Reichmuth Funeral Home created a Webcast in memory of Marilyn "Frankie" Margaret Kirkwood*



Reichmuth Funeral Home - December 29, 2025 at 12:22 PM

SC

Thank you for providing this. I don't see how to download it, but I would like to keep it.

Susie Clinton - January 07 at 09:49 PM

BN

“ *Bob and I will miss our dear friend. We will miss our chats, our memories and especially your mince pies. Rest in peace dear friend. We know you are at peace.*

Bob and Gerri Nordell - December 29, 2025 at 05:19 PM



“ *Serene Reflections Bouquet was purchased for the family of Marilyn "Frankie" Margaret Kirkwood.*



December 29, 2025 at 10:28 AM

TL

“ *The Tuesday morning coffee ladies! purchased the White Poinsettia for the family of Marilyn "Frankie" Margaret Kirkwood.*



The Tuesday morning coffee ladies! - December 29, 2025 at 12:26 AM



“ *Florist Choice Bouquet was purchased for the family of Marilyn "Frankie" Margaret Kirkwood.*



December 28, 2025 at 10:35 PM

LS

“ *Love, Amy and Sadie purchased the Serene Retreat for the family of Marilyn "Frankie" Margaret Kirkwood.*



Love, Amy and Sadie - December 28, 2025 at 07:03 PM

LB

“ *Love, Lisa, Bea, Jon and Justin Boysen purchased the Enchanted Cottage for the family of Marilyn "Frankie" Margaret Kirkwood.*



Love, Lisa, Bea, Jon and Justin Boysen - December 28, 2025 at 06:40 PM

LB

“ Love, Lisa, Bea, Jon and Justin Boysen planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Marilyn "Frankie" Margaret Kirkwood.

Love, Lisa, Bea, Jon and Justin Boysen - December 28, 2025 at 06:40 PM

JK

“ John K. purchased the Love's Journey for the family of Marilyn "Frankie" Margaret Kirkwood.



John K. - December 28, 2025 at 05:04 PM

JK

“ John K. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Marilyn "Frankie" Margaret Kirkwood.

John K. - December 28, 2025 at 05:04 PM

SR

“ Stan (Poodie) & Joan, Bill & Rick Royce purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Marilyn "Frankie" Margaret Kirkwood.



Stan (Poodie) & Joan, Bill & Rick Royce - December 26, 2025 at 04:36 PM

MF

“ Maggie and Ford purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of Marilyn "Frankie" Margaret Kirkwood.



Maggie and Ford - December 26, 2025 at 12:01 PM

MF

“ Maggie and Ford planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Marilyn "Frankie" Margaret Kirkwood.

Maggie and Ford - December 26, 2025 at 12:01 PM

LS

“ Frankie was a wonderful neighbor and friend. I loved talking to her and hearing about stories from her life. I was always impressed that she traveled and moved so many times with young kids and still found time to make deep friendships and do fun things. When she reached an age that others would be thinking about slowing down and relaxing, she went to school and became the Valley librarian. My son, Dylan remembers her as his favorite librarian. We came for all her special events and to check out books every week. She was always in good spirits and positive about life. She loved her family so much, appreciated that they visited her so much and enabled her to live in her home until the end. We talked often about how beautiful the lake was and what a peaceful view she had from her house. Her entire house was full of pictures that her husband Jack drew and painted. It was so homey and full of love. I will miss her dearly but I know she has gone to an even better place, much more beautiful and full of even more love.

Lori Snyder - December 25, 2025 at 12:31 PM

GW

“ Gail and Doug White purchased the Florist Choice Bouquet for the family of Marilyn "Frankie" Margaret Kirkwood.



Gail and Doug White - December 24, 2025 at 12:17 PM

RS

“ Reba Davis and Sarah Davis Severson purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of Marilyn "Frankie" Margaret Kirkwood.



Reba Davis and Sarah Davis Severson - December 24, 2025 at 10:12 AM

VL

“ Valley Public Library purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Marilyn "Frankie" Margaret Kirkwood.



Valley Public Library - December 23, 2025 at 02:25 PM

SL

“ Sue Withey, Dave & Mary Lawrence purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Marilyn "Frankie" Margaret Kirkwood.



Sue Withey, Dave & Mary Lawrence - December 23, 2025 at 12:07 PM

SL

“ Sue Withey, Dave & Mary Lawrence planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Marilyn "Frankie" Margaret Kirkwood.

Sue Withey, Dave & Mary Lawrence - December 23, 2025 at 12:07 PM

RL

“ Randy and Linda Laubner purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Marilyn "Frankie" Margaret Kirkwood.



Randy and Linda Laubner - December 23, 2025 at 09:23 AM

KH

“ Dear Family, How we love both your parents, Frankie and Jack...Many wonderful Ginger Cove memories. Valley Library Foundation and extended friendship..So happy Shirley McShane and I got to visit you in November with a great visit and prayers. Beautiful daughters and caring family who took such good care of you...Frankie, you're promoted and we celebrate your life well lived.. Kay Hayden Port Charlotte FL

KAY HAYDEN - December 23, 2025 at 08:08 AM



“ Small Garden Dish was purchased for the family of Marilyn "Frankie" Margaret Kirkwood.



December 22, 2025 at 06:41 PM