



## Mary Ellen Vondra

January 30, 1942 - March 31, 2026

Mary Ellen (Hufford) Vondra was born and raised in Omaha. She is the daughter of the late John and Gertrude Hufford. Mary wed her teenage sweetheart, Tom Vondra after graduating from Bishop Clarkson School of Nursing. Mary and Tom raised their family of five children in Omaha with faith and love. Mary worked as a pediatric nurse at Children's Hospital where she eventually became the director in charge of nursing education. Mary was always involved in the church and her local community. She was even chosen as the Queen of the College World Series in 1961. While working as a nurse educator, Mary furthered her own knowledge by obtaining her master's degree in health education from the University of Nebraska-Omaha.

Always advocating for children's causes, Mary worked to create and promote the "Never Shake a Baby" campaign. She even presented this safety information to representatives at the state capital. Together with her friends and advocates for children, Mary helped start the organization Ted E Bear Hollow (now part of the Collective for Hope organization). Mary even recruited her husband Tom to use his woodworking skills to help create tangible tools to assist children and families manage the heavy burden of grief. She received numerous awards for her tireless work and was deeply honored to have a room in the facility named after her in recognition of her dedication as a founder, facilitator, board member and past president.

Mary's passions were as broad as the Platte River. The original Sokol Camp cabin on the bank of the Platte was the site of many vacation and weekend adventures. Cousins would come join the Vondra family for fishing, toad catching, hayrack rides and exploring...all cherished family memories. Tom and Mary's retirement dream became a reality when they remodeled the cabin into a wonderful home that continued to provide beautiful opportunities for family and friends to gather.

No one was ever a "stranger" to Mary. She would quickly identify the special qualities of every person she met and then effortlessly acknowledge them on a connected and personal level. She would learn your favorite color, song, something you collected and personalize each interaction with a classic touch from her enormously generous heart.

Mary loved to travel with her husband and family. The Colorado Rockies, specifically Estes Park, was a favorite retreat that she and Tom cherished. Today it continues to be a beloved vacation destination for the Vondra family, and even the chosen site for two recent marriage proposals in the Vondra family. The love that Tom and Mary felt and shared in this specific location lives on with their family.

Mary was dedicated to her profession, the Catholic church and the causes that she advocated for...but above all Mary was a loving and devoted mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. She felt every holiday, birthday, graduation or baptism deserved a special celebration and perfectly selected gifts. The blessings that Mary poured into her family during the special occasions and also in the everyday moments is what holds them all tightly connected forever. Mary spent many years teaching CCD classes about eternal life, heaven and beautiful reunions. These promises are what offer comfort and peace to all who will miss her dearly.

Mary is preceded in death by her husband, Thomas. She is survived by her children, Lisa (Jay) Quinn, Christine (John) Anter, Thomas (Roxane) Vondra, Amy (Jon) Erickson, and Andrew (Shannon) Vondra; 12 grandchildren, Alissa (Brent) Fay, Nick (Abbey) Molek, Hannah Anter, Hailey (Dylan) Melanson, John Thomas Anter, Alex Vondra, Tyler Vondra, Tori Hurt, Nolan (Kira) Erickson, Gus Erickson, Cal Erickson, Chloe Vondra; and 3 great grandchildren, Bearon Fay, Hank Molek, and Stella Molek.

In Lieu of Flowers, Family suggests memorials to Collective for Hope ( 7811 Farnam Dr. Omaha, NE 68114)

# Previous Events

## Visitation

APR 9. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Reichmuth Funeral Home - Omaha / Elkhorn  
21901 W. Maple Rd.  
P.O. Box 711  
Elkhorn, NE 68022  
402-289-2222  
services@reichmuthfuneralhomes.com  
<https://www.reichmuthfuneralhomes.com/>

## Vigil service

APR 9. 7:00 PM (CT)

Reichmuth Funeral Home - Omaha / Elkhorn  
21901 W. Maple Rd.  
P.O. Box 711  
Elkhorn, NE 68022  
402-289-2222  
services@reichmuthfuneralhomes.com  
<https://www.reichmuthfuneralhomes.com/>

## Mass of the Christian Burial

APR 10. 10:30 AM (CT)

St. Patrick's Catholic Church  
18602 W. Maple Street  
Elkhorn, NE 68022

## Burial

APR 10. 12:30 PM (CT)

Mt. Calvary Catholic Cemetery  
Elkhorn, NE 68022

# Tribute Wall

JT

“ *Mary and Tom were our Sokol neighbors for years. Mary was so friendly and sweet. We hated to see them move.* ”

Judy Tomanek - April 11 at 01:42 PM

KH

“ *Mary was a loving person and very accepting. She always treated people with respect. It was a joy to be in her presence. I feel blessed to have seen her one last time after reconnecting with her children, my sweet friends. May God help you through this time of loss and know He is always faithful and we'll never leave you or abandon you.* ”



Karen Heater - April 09 at 08:53 PM



“ *Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Mary Ellen Vondra.* ”



April 09 at 08:19 PM



“ *A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Mary Ellen Vondra.* ”

April 09 at 08:19 PM

SF

“ Sarah (Atchison) Flanagan and family purchased the Medium Dish Garden for the family of Mary Ellen Vondra.



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Sarah (Atchison) Flanagan and family - April 09 at 09:30 AM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Mary Ellen Vondra.



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April 09 at 09:16 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Mary Ellen Vondra.

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April 08 at 09:32 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Mary Ellen Vondra.



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April 08 at 09:21 PM



“ *Florist Choice Bouquet was purchased for the family of Mary Ellen Vondra.*



April 08 at 06:40 PM



“ *Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Mary Ellen Vondra.*



April 08 at 06:18 PM



“ *Margaret Gillain Friend and Mary Gillain purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of Mary Ellen Vondra.*



**Margaret Gillain Friend and Mary Gillain - April 07 at 03:59 PM**



“ *Margaret Gillain Friend and Mary Gillain planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mary Ellen Vondra.*

**Margaret Gillain Friend and Mary Gillain - April 07 at 03:59 PM**

WP

“ With sympathy, Deb Pieper purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of Mary Ellen Vondra.



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**With sympathy, Deb Pieper** - April 07 at 03:58 PM



“ Crystal Cross Bouquet was purchased for the family of Mary Ellen Vondra.



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April 07 at 01:25 PM

TM

“ Tracee Kalba Michel purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Mary Ellen Vondra.



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**Tracee Kalba Michel** - April 06 at 08:56 PM

TM

“ Tracee Kalba Michel planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mary Ellen Vondra.

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**Tracee Kalba Michel** - April 06 at 08:56 PM



“ *Medium Dish Garden was purchased for the family of Mary Ellen Vondra.*



April 06 at 08:52 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Mary Ellen Vondra.

April 06 at 08:52 PM



“ *Days of Sunshine Bouquet was purchased for the family of Mary Ellen Vondra.*



April 06 at 03:45 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Mary Ellen Vondra.

April 06 at 03:45 PM



“ *The Hurt Family purchased the Rose Garden Heart for the family of Mary Ellen Vondra.*



**The Hurt Family** - April 05 at 09:37 PM

TF

“ The Hurt Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mary Ellen Vondra.

The Hurt Family - April 05 at 09:37 PM

WC

“ With love, Steve and Daranda Collins purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Mary Ellen Vondra.



With love, Steve and Daranda Collins - April 04 at 05:06 PM

WC

“ With love, Steve and Daranda Collins planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mary Ellen Vondra.

With love, Steve and Daranda Collins - April 04 at 05:06 PM

RB

“ Richard Brown purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Mary Ellen Vondra.



Richard Brown - April 04 at 01:20 PM

RB

“ Richard Brown planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mary Ellen Vondra.

Richard Brown - April 04 at 01:20 PM