



Lila P. McCleary

October 2, 1930 - October 23, 2018

Lila P. McCleary of Dunwoody Village, Newtown Sq., PA died peacefully on Tues. Oct. 23rd. 2018. Beloved wife of the late Rev. John Franklin McCleary Jr. She is survived by loving nieces and nephews. Her Funeral Service will be held on Mon. Oct. 29th at 11 A.M. in The Presbyterian Church of Llanerch, 211 Lansdowne Rd, Havertown, PA 19083, with a reception to follow. Burial will be private in New London Presbyterian Churchyard. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made in her memory to The Presbyterian Church of Llanerch.

Comments



“ Nancy Raley, Becky Haschke, Debbie Phelps, Alan purchased the Country Basket Blooms for the family of Lila P. McCleary.



Nancy Raley, Becky Haschke, Debbie Phelps, Alan - October 27, 2018 at 04:17 PM



“ Gracious Guardian

Tonight when I heard that my friend, my “big sister”, Lila McCleary had died, I thought of this quote from Macbeth, which she and I had taught at least 50 times through the years, “She should have died hereafter...” Lila was the exact opposite of Lady Macbeth but she would have known the quote.

And then I thought of a picture I took in 1979 and I went rooting through my old files to find it. Looking at it now I muse, “wouldn’t it be great to go back in time to that morning when we both had a prep period and Lila was gracious enough to pose with a book and her tea sitting on the steps of the “A” Wing ..?” I think the department was creating a series of posters encouraging reading and when others refused Lila simply said, “yes.” That was her way.

Lila McCleary was a strong and gracious guardian of Literature and she was my “big sister”

When I arrived at Radnor High School in September of 1970 it must have seemed to Lila that the barbarians were at the gates. Lila was of a different generation and a different way of seeing the world as it should be. I was a bearded, young man, just back from Vietnam who thought the poetry of the Beatles or Bob Dylan was as important as Keats or Shelly. Lila had just lived through a decade that saw culture turned on its head. High school boys had hair down to their shoulders and the young girls were wearing ripped jeans and skirts high above their knees.

It was in those tumultuous times that Lila was assigned to be my big sister and she took on that job with a sense of responsibility and an innate kindness. She showed me how to fill out my plan book and how to set up grades. She took me to the book closet and made sure I had the right English Lit textbooks for my five classes of English Lit. We shared lunches and cups of tea when we were able, and we talked about the literature we were both teaching, the same canon that had been taught in high schools for 70 years. We didn't know it then, but there were big changes to come. By the time Lila retired the 15 sections of English Lit had shrunk to 2. We now had electives and computers and video cameras. It would have been understandable if she had grown bitter or angry but I never saw her angry or heard her utter a harsh word to teacher or student. She loved her students and respected her fellow teachers and she was too much of a lady to ever be rude.

Looking back I feel there were giants walking the halls of Radnor high school in those days. The august Wayne Miller, the great Rose Ferdinand, Pat Gibbons, Mary Alice Carter and John Nash who started teaching in a one room school in Kansas. And of course my friend Lila. I felt a little bit like a pretender among the professionals. But Lila always made me feel like a grown up.

Thank you Lila!

I will miss you

Love,

Jim



Jim Talone - October 26, 2018 at 11:38 AM



“ Thank you, Mr Talone. I was lucky enough to have been one of Mrs McCleary's students, and I am grateful to you for your beautiful tribute. How wonderful that you'd taken this photo, and were able to find it. Her teachings are with me to this day. I will never forget her.
Corene Lemaitre

Corene - October 28, 2018 at 02:48 PM



“ The words of a beloved teacher live on in her students.

Tree Riesener - October 28, 2018 at 03:52 PM



“ Great tribute, my friend. She mentored so many teachers at Radnor, and every September, she gifted me with flowers for my desk. I will miss her and cherish the time we spent together at Radnor. How lucky were we to have such a generous colleague! God's grace, my dear friend.

Maz

Dr. Michael Maslayak - October 28, 2018 at 06:04 PM



“ I remember Lila with fondness and joy. She was always gracious and kind. I taught with her for near to thirty years at Radnor High School in Radnor, PA. She will be missed.

Sheila Ashley

Sheila Ashley - October 26, 2018 at 10:33 AM



“ Mrs. "Mother" McCleary taught me English and values in life. She was a dedicated and passionate educator who cared about all her students. To this day, I have fond memories of her humor, vocabulary words and love of language. Thanks to her, I carry them through to my friends and colleagues.

She was a true positive force for all.

Cathy Seward

Catherine L Seward - October 25, 2018 at 10:16 PM



“ I can still remember the first day we met you & John. Thankyou both for being a part of our live's. I have such great memories of the Llanerch Presbyterian family. God Bless you & John.

Steve Hodge - October 25, 2018 at 11:15 AM