Yvonne Joy Wunderli Zundel

March 12, 1939 ~ September 14, 2015

Yvonne Joy Wunderli Zundel, 76, of Salt Lake City, Utah passed away on Monday, September 14, 2015 from age related illnesses surrounded by her loving family.

Yvonne was known to her grandchildren as "Mimi" and to her husband Ivan Brown Zundel of over 58 years as "Von". She was admired by all who knew her and was revered by her family for her lack of guile and her innate integrity, spirituality, and non-judgmental counseling. She was born with a giving, loving, welcoming heart and an unshakeable optimism. These qualities drew many to her over the course of her life.

Yvonne was born in Detroit, Michigan as the youngest of eight children to John Henry and Clara Ida Kropp Wunderli on March 12, 1939 when her mother was 45 years old. She was given the name "Joy" in celebration of the surprise that her birth was to her parents. Her father had a dental lab in the basement of their home and Yvonne often fondly remembered the aroma of simmering caramel and other candy that would fill the house along with the other items being prepared in the lab. Her father also loved to bring home sweet rolls and cakes from a local German bakery. This sweet indulgence all contributed to her life-long love of chocolate, a family trait, which was introduced and nurtured by their father from his Swiss heritage.

When Yvonne's father became ill as a preteen, her mother moved the family to Ogden, Utah. She loved the memories of coming to Salt Lake City with her mother for shopping and lunch at the old ZCMI. For this reason, she loved living downtown after Brown's retirement.

When her mother passed away when she was 13 and her father was in failing health [dying 2 years later], she went to live with an older sister, Elva Richardson [Sully], in Chicago. When Elva's family moved out of state, Yvonne went to live with another sister, Bette Daniels [Bill], in Sacramento where she completed her last 2 years of high school. Von attended BYU in Provo her freshman year, and she met Brown in a Book of Mormon class at age 17. They married a year later on September 11, 1957 in the Los Angeles temple. They lived most of their married life in Utah and Arizona.

Yvonne had a strong testimony of her LDS faith and was active in the Church all of her life. As a young mother she was called to be the ward Relief Society President and a few years later supported Brown in his calling as Bishop when they lived in Utah after Brown completed graduate school.

In Tucson, she served in a variety of ward leadership and teaching positions in Relief Society and the Young Women's program. She was also an early morning Seminary teacher for 4 years and was able to teach two of her four children. Her steadfastness and natural sensitivity to the spirit led to future callings in the Stake Young Women's and Relief Society programs. She served on the Stake boards of both of these organizations continuously for 15 years acting as President of both organizations for 9 of those years.

She had deferred her education to help Brown through school, but always had a goal to obtain a college degree. When all of the children were in school, she completed her bachelor's degree in Nutrition and Food Science at the University of Utah graduating Magna cum Laude. She was the first mother to be accepted into the Dietetic Internship program at LDS Hospital subsequently passing her national boards as a Registered Dietician. She had an exceptional ability in balancing the needs at home: nurturing four young children, supporting her husband in his calling as bishop, and managing a full time school load. She attributed her success to early morning spiritual preparedness that helped her in effective time management, and provided wisdom and strength to fulfill all her roles.

Fortunately, she never had to work to help support the family, but held numerous part time jobs in the culinary industry to support her passion for health and food. She was able to work in cooking specialty stores, teach food classes and perform demonstrations, and prepare food specialty items for one of the leading Southwest cuisine restaurants where she also did recipe testing for the owner. The love of preparing wonderful, nutritional and tasty meals is a talent that was passed down to her daughters who are all excellent cooks.

One of the favorite years of their marriage was the time the family spent in Washington DC while Brown attended the National War College. Vicki and Jill, the two youngest children, were in high school at the time and the family had many opportunities for cultural experiences at the Kennedy Center, the Smithsonian Institution, and the Washington National Theater and on several trips to New York City. Later Yvonne joined Brown on numerous trips back to DC, NYC, and Boston as well as to Europe and Mexico City with friends and family. They loved these trips to visit museums and attended scores of professional musical and stage productions.

Following Brown's retirement in 2001, Yvonne and Brown were blessed with a mission call in 2002 to the Temple Square Visitor's Center where they met many wonderful young women and senior couples from around the world. Following their mission, they served for nearly 4 years in the LDS Hospital Branch assisting members and staff with their spiritual needs.

In early 2007, Yvonne began having random blackouts and falls for which there was never a positive diagnosis or cure. In the process, she suffered head injuries and other problems that led to significant dementia at the end of her life. Eventually upon medical recommendation, Brown was at her side in the forenoon every day when these blackouts occurred to help protect her from further injury.

For many years and even following Yvonne's failing health, they greatly enjoyed their daily walks around downtown Salt Lake City. They also celebrated Friday and Saturday movie and dinner date nights and attended many local concerts and other activities that were easily accessible living in the city and close to Temple Square. Their original move to Utah to fulfill missions led them to enjoy 13 years of life together in the heart of Salt Lake City. Here they also made wonderful friends and had family close by to celebrate holidays and enjoy many grandchildren activities. This proved to be one of the best decisions and moves of their lives.

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Brown and the children wish to thank all the family and friends who have spent many hours and greatly assisted with Yvonne's tender care. For an extended period, the staffs at Encompass Hospice and Home Instead Home Care have been marvelous help and have collectively been temporal guardian angels in assisting Brown in her care.

Yvonne is survived by her husband Ivan Brown Zundel, four children Cheryl Swensen [Eric], Rick Zundel [Janna], Jill Zundel, Vicki Reese [Jack], 10 grand children whom she loved dearly, and two sisters Marvel Dorrell [Jim], and Arlene Eldredge.

A memorial service will be held at the Larkin Mortuary chapel, 260 East South Temple, Salt Lake City [801-363-5781] at 12:00 PM on Monday, September 21 with a visitation from 10:00-11:30 AM.