Jill Amelia Giuliani Kennedy

October 5, 1941 ~ January 30, 2019

Jill Amelia Giuliani Kennedy passed away on January 30, 2019, surrounded by family in her home in Salt Lake City, Utah, after a multi-year battle with appendiceal cancer. Jill was born October 5, 1941, in Berwyn, Illinois, to Chester and Ann Giuliani. Throughout her life, she was proud of her immigrant legacy as the grandchild of first-generation Americans Trofim Sedorchuk, Sonia Omilchuk, Anibale Giuliani, and second-generation Anna Melchiori. She enjoyed trips to downtown Chicago to shop at Marshall Fields, where she would eat her life-time favorite Frango Mint chocolates which she continued to share with all of us children in more recent years.

In the 1940s and early 1950s, her parents worried about polio and were somewhat calmed when she spent summers away from the city, visiting her Nona on Robinson Lake in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. There she roamed, swam, fished, and adventured with her cousin Butchie.

An only child until 12, her parents doted on her. She contracted meningitis at age 7, and because ambulances would not transport a such a patient, her father loaded her into the back of his new station wagon and sped to the hospital where, miraculously, she survived. Jill was a straight-A student in high school and was awarded the National Westinghouse Science Award. She graduated from Arlington High School in Arlington Heights, Illinois, in 1959, after which she matriculated at Radcliffe College. At women's colleges during this era, parietal hours and cloth napkins at meals were commonplace, and she loved sharing stories about those college experiences with her grandchildren. Jill studied chemistry as one of only a few women in science in the Harvard classrooms filled with men.

She met her 57-year companion and sweetheart, John Paul Kennedy, in the Fall of 1960 in a German class in Sever Hall in Harvard Yard. Jill and John were married in August 1962 in Chicago and honeymooned on Robinson Lake before driving back to Cambridge in a ‚Äò55 Chevy BelAire. They graduated in 1963, the first year that women at Radcliffe received degrees from both Radcliffe College and Harvard University. That fall, Jill and John moved to Palo Alto, California, where Jill worked in a chemistry lab at the Stanford Research Institute while John attended Stanford Law School. She became a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints in 1964, and she and John were sealed in the Oakland Temple in May 1965.

Upon John's graduation, they returned to the suburbs of Chicago, and John practiced law downtown. While living in Arlington Heights, Illinois, their first three children were born: Katherine, John Paul Jr., and Jennifer. The family moved to Salt Lake City in 1972, where John started a law practice with close friends, and they had three more children: David, Michael, and Annie. When she arrived in Utah, Jill was invited to participate in a women's book club and in a study group with John; both groups continue today. In these groups, she developed friendships that lasted for 47 years; she valued beyond measure these relationships, along with many others she made during her lifetime.

In recent years, she particularly enjoyed game afternoons with her Northpoint friends. She had deep fondness for both of her Salt Lake City neighborhood communities, Harvard/Yale and the Avenues.

Jill had a very rich life contributing to organizations and programs that had great meaning to her. As a stay-at-home mother, Jill volunteered thousands of hours in Salt Lake City schools and helped grow the EQUIP/ELP programs at Lowell Elementary School and West High School. She passed her passion for education to her children and many others. Jill used her incredible wit and intellect to help hundreds of kids get into college through a private business and as a volunteer and college counselor at West High School. Jill, a Democrat, was chosen by Governor Mike Leavitt to run for Utah State Board of Education in 1996, and easily won a seat on the nonpartisan State Board. During her second term, she was elected Chair.

Jill was called to serve on the Primary General Board and loved her time developing curriculum and the current Children's Songbook and visiting other primaries as near as Idaho and far as Hawaii. Following her General Board service, she was called to serve on a Church writing committee, developing Primary lessons for world-wide use. Always conscious of her family's and John's ancestors, Jill became a knowledgeable genealogist who was particularly skilled in Italian and Swedish records. She researched and traveled to Italy, Belarus, Ireland, and Sweden to track down family roots and walk where her children's ancestors walked.

Jill and John also served in St. Petersburg, Russia, leading that Mission from 2001-2004, where Jill mentored scores of missionaries, gave hundreds of flu shots, and baked thousands of chocolate chip cookies as she learned Russian and shared her testimony of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. For years, Jill volunteered at the Family History Library, and she truly loved helping others find their own distant relatives in the archives and on the internet.

Jill was an avid traveler and loved exploring different locations with her family. When her children were young, the family road-tripped every summer to her parents' home in the Upper Peninsula on Smoky Lake where they would pick raspberries, waterski, and slap at mosquitos. Her relationship with each of her grandchildren was unique and individualized, and she was quick to recognize and celebrate their talents. She deeply mourned the early passing of grandson Jack and thought about him often. Jill had the amazingly rare gift of being the mother-in-law who was loved deeply and sincerely by all of her children's spouses. She was strongly attached to the pets she had over her lifetime, including her childhood golden retriever Lady and her parakeet Perry, telling stories about Lady and her eleven puppies and Perry's antics after he landed on a stick of butter. Up through last fall, she walked her papillon Hugo four miles every day, often starting at 6:15 a.m. She logged thousands of miles walking the loop around the mouth of City Creek Canyon and was in excellent shape up through the fall of 2018.

Jill was an avid reader. Not only had she read every classic novel, she was current on important contemporary authors. She followed the news daily, read The New Yorker weekly, attended the Utah Shakespeare Festival yearly, and used the Oxford comma always. A skilled pianist, Jill loved classical music and could often be caught whistling a movement of a Beethoven symphony or a Chopin piano concerto. She enjoyed playing games with her grandkids, yelling at the TV during football games, going to dinner with friends, and teaching people of all ages in her quiet and brilliant manner. Appropriately, Jill collected Christmas angels and has left behind a beautiful collection as a fitting metaphor for her life and actions.

Above all, Jill was a terrific wife, mother, and nana; the best anybody could ask for. She is survived by her husband, John; her six children: Katherine Kennedy (John Yoon), Salt Lake City, Utah; John Paul (Laura), Farmington, Utah; Jennifer Gee (Kevin Gee), Keller, Texas; David (Teishi), Annecy, France; Michael (Natalie), McLean, Virginia; and Annie Kennedy, Salt Lake City, Utah; and sixteen surviving grandchildren: Michael, Annina, David, and Ella Kennedy-Yoon; Robert, Matthew, Elizabeth, and Sarah Kennedy; Amy, Patrick, and John Gee; Amelia and Claire Kennedy; and Emily, Abigail, and Rose Kennedy.

Jill loved flowers but was also very practical. If you wish to make a difference, please contribute toLynch Syndrome International. A viewing will be held at Larkin, 260 East South Temple, Salt Lake City, Utah, on Sunday, February 3, from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. The Super Bowl will be screened live at this viewing, just as Jill would have wanted,Äîas long as the Pats are losing. Services will be held at the Ensign First Ward, 135 A Street, Salt Lake City, Utah, on Monday, February 4, 2019, with a viewing from 10:30 a.m. to 11:45 a.m., a funeral service at noon. She will be interred at the Salt Lake City Cemetery.