

Mary Ellen Caine

April 30, 1935 ~ May 8, 2022

Mary Ellen Barnes Caine—wife, mother, grandmother, and friend—passed away on Mother's Day, May 8, 2022, in her home surrounded by her loving family following a courageous battle with ALS. She was a model of grace, warmth, kindness and generosity.

Mary Ellen was born April 30, 1935 to Ellen Cornelia Neilson and Maurice Runnels Barnes in Washington, DC, as the second of four children. The Barnes home was a happy one, filled with music, extended family, and close friends. Raised at a time when the LDS community in the nation's capital was closely knit, friends were like family and remained so throughout her life.

Her parents both came from strong Utah families, so summers were often spent in Utah visiting relatives. She loved her high school years in Washington, which included field hockey, cheerleading, and also representing the state of Utah as a Cherry Blossom Princess during the annual festival in Washington.

Following high school, Mary Ellen came to Utah to attend the University of Utah, where she studied Elementary Education. As a freshman living in Carlson Hall, she joined the Pi Beta Phi sorority, where she made some of her dearest, lifelong friends. It was through one of these friends that she met a tall, handsome man from Idaho, Thomas Hugh Caine, a member of Beta Theta Pi fraternity on his way to medical school, and it was a perfect match. Mary Ellen and Tom were married in 1959 as she graduated and he entered medical school, beginning a caring partnership that would continue until Tom's passing in 2018. How beautiful it is knowing that they are back together again.

Mary Ellen taught elementary school in Salt Lake City while Tom was in medical school and continued teaching during his internship in Oklahoma and fellowship in Wisconsin, until she became a mother.

Speaking of Mary Ellen and Tom, it is hard to think of one without the other. Theirs was a marriage built around Tom's career as a physician and Mary Ellen's calling as a mother to their six children. They were complementary in every way, and succeeded in their respective roles largely due to the support of the other. Their marriage serves as an example of kindness, loyalty, mutual respect, and generosity for their children and grandchildren.

When their children started driving themselves to school, Tom relinquished his car and Mary Ellen famously became his "chauffeur." They cherished the time they had together each day, driving to and from the hospital, where they would discuss their children and decompress from their busy lives. Mary Ellen was Tom's ultimate source of comfort, supporting him through his years as a bishop, his midlife battle with leukemia, and during the illness that preceded his death.

As a mother, Mary Ellen instilled in her children a love of learning, a love of music, and a love of chocolate chip cookies. She encouraged each child to pursue his or her passions - including sports, music and dance - and has

continued to nurture a love of family through home-cooked family dinners, annual family vacations, and frequent phone calls. She impressed her grandchildren with her ability to adapt to the latest technology to stay connected.

An accomplished musician, Mary Ellen joined the Mormon Tabernacle Choir early in her marriage and sang with them for over 20 years. She formed deep friendships, traveled the world, and reveled in the sound of some of the world's most beautiful music. She would credit her years in the Choir with helping her maintain her sanity during the most challenging years of motherhood.

Mary Ellen looked for opportunities to support her husband's medical community and served as the President of the Utah Medical Auxiliary. Her community involvement also included the Utah Symphony Guild and the U of U Alumni Board. A devoted member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, she served in many capacities including early-morning seminary teacher, Young Women and Relief Society presidency member, and Stake Relief Society President.

Mary Ellen loved to laugh and will be remembered for her warm, beautiful smile and for always having something kind to say. She loved to bask in the company of friends and family, but never as the center of attention. At the end of her life, she struggled with ALS as it slowly robbed her of the ability to speak, eat, and do most of the things she loved. In spite of that, she continued to convey her warm, loving spirit without words and maintained positivity and grace while relishing the time she still had with her family and friends. As she always said, "It's fun to do unpleasant things together!"

She was blessed with a wonderfully loyal group of friends throughout her life. Her family would like to thank them for their unwavering love and support, especially in her later years.

Mary Ellen is preceded in death by her husband, Dr. Thomas Hugh Caine and one brother, Maurice R. Barnes, Jr. She is survived by her brother David N. Barnes (Cherie), her sister Carolyn Gardner (Kem), her six children and their spouses: Bill (Margit) Caine, Catherine (Stan) Christensen, Stephen (Pamela) Caine, David (Kimberlee) Caine, Thomas (Sarah) Caine, and Marianne (Gavin) Van Wagoner; and her 24 wonderful grandchildren.

Services will be held Friday, May 13th at 12:30pm in the Monument Park Stake Center, 1320 Wasatch Drive in Salt Lake City. Friends may call the evening prior to the funeral from 6:00-8:00pm at the Stake Center or Friday before the funeral from 11:00-12:15pm. Interment at Larkin Sunset Lawn, 2350 East 1300 South.