

## In Memory of Kay Marie Sparks February 6, 1943 - November 2, 2024



Kay Marie Sparks, the widow of Ralph L. Sparks, passed away on November 2nd, in her Waco home.

Born to Violette May and David Kayle Phillips, Kay moved with her parents and two siblings to Waco from Akron, Ohio in 1946 at the age of 3 when her father was transferred to General Tire and Rubber Co.

Kay committed to her Christian faith at an early age, attending Austin Avenue Methodist Church as a youth and being a part of the Methodist Youth Fellowship. She briefly attended both Baylor University and the University of Texas at Austin, pledging Delta Zeta, and studying Business Administration. She left college to care for her father after the passing of her mother.

In 1965, Kay embarked on a distinguished career in the insurance industry, dedicating over 40 years to the field. She advanced steadily, ultimately achieving the position of Claims Manager. Throughout her career, she worked for several companies, including

Philadelphia American Life Insurance Company, American Amicable Life Insurance Company, and General American Life Insurance Company. Her professional journey is a testament to her commitment and leadership in the industry.

Her heart for service shone brightly through her unwavering dedication to numerous organizations, where she consistently demonstrated compassion, commitment, and selflessness. As a member of the Beta Sigma Phi sorority (Laureate Gamma Epsilon chapter), she served on various committees and as vice president of the chapter. Kay was recognized as the Sweetheart of the sorority, received the Order of the Rose, and the Silver Circle Award for 25 years of service. She was also an active and passionate member of the McLennan County Republican Women. Following her enthusiasm for bowling, Kay was an active member of the Women's Majors Bowling League, serving as vice president during her time. As a graduate of Waco High School Class of 1960, Kay attended and helped to organize numerous reunions.

She was an enthusiastic encourager and a faithful supporter of her husband's musical pursuits, always present at Ralph's performances, assisting with CD sales, signings, tickets, and more.

Known affectionately as "the cat lady" by those who loved her, Kay's enduring love for animals was evident, especially in the numerous cats she lovingly took in and cared for over the years.