



## Kathleen Merrill

November 18, 1926 - December 18, 2010

Kathleen “Kay” Merrill passed away at home Saturday, December 18th in Corvallis. Kay was born Kathleen Emma Smith in the Bronx, New York, November 18, 1926 to Philip and Marie Smith, respectively an Insurance Salesman and Homemaker. She was the second born and, only daughter, of a family of four from third generation Irish immigrants.

Kay learned to be plucky at an early age, jostling with her three brothers John, Philip and Frank. She was always ready to “play rough” and considered herself something of a Tom boy. Interestingly, she excelled at Mathematics in school and was the one who gave homework help to her brothers. Upon completion from St. Luke’s High School in 1944 she joined the WAC’s to study Nursing. World War II had wrapped up by her graduation and in 1947, she and a friend, began an epic journey by Greyhound Bus to the West Coast, eventually settling in Santa Monica, California. She was the first member of her family to settle in the West. She began an Exodus that would eventually include all of her Siblings.

Santa Monica in 1948 was a true paradise: lots of sun and fun on a low budget with an uninterrupted view of the Ocean. She and her friend Bobbie, who would later become the Godmother to her first born child, lived within a couple of blocks of the Ocean and the Santa Monica Hospital where they worked as Registered Nurses. Of note during this time was acting as an “on set” technical advisor to a medical movie being shot in Hollywood and starring Caesar Romero. She also nursed actor Ronald Regan while he was in traction

for a fractured femur. But most importantly, this is where Kay would ultimately meet her future husband, Milo K. Merrill, MD.

“Smithy” and “Mike” would marry in November of 1949. They would hop around the country while Mike completed various Residencies, finally settling in Corvallis, Oregon in October 1962. Their eighth child would be born in Corvallis, completing a family of six girls and two boys. Her family lived in the country and she enthusiastically supported that lifestyle, becoming an excellent organizer, proficient horsewoman and scooter rider. Kay would also go on to become a licensed Real Estate Agent. Eventually, she and Mike’s children married and settled into their own lives, providing them with fourteen grandchildren. In addition, the family welcomed a great grandchild as well. They began to take time to travel after Mike retired from Corvallis Radiology in 1988, going to Mexico many times where they were fond of Cabo San Lucas and sport fishing. An especially eye opening experience was a trip to the Middle East in the early 1990’s.

Kay was always able to “rise to the occasion,” regardless of the circumstances. This is her legacy to her family. Preceded in death by her husband, Milo K. Merrill, daughter, Kitty Lively, brothers Philip and Frank; Kay is survived by her eldest brother, Jack Smith and her children: Barbara Corden, Patty Patrick, Greg Merrill, Megan Campbell, Maureen Bern, Ann Eiden, Michael Merrill and her 14 grandchildren and one great grandchild. Memorial donations in Kay’s name may be directed to the Corvallis Boys and Girls Club in care of McHenry Funeral Home, 206 NW 5th St., Corvallis, OR 97330.

A private mass will be held for family members at St. Mary’s Catholic Church in Corvallis and a reception in Kay’s honor will be held at The Vue, 517 SW 2nd St., 6th Floor Corvallis, Oregon at 11:00 am, Wednesday, December 29th. All friends of Kay and her family are cordially invited to attend.

# Tribute Wall

EM

“ Lots of love and prayers are with Kay's family during this difficult time.

Erin Meneely - December 28, 2010 at 01:36 PM

FH

“ To all the Merrill "kids" - you are still "kids" to us. We loved your Mom and your Dad - they were outstanding human beings. You are blessed to have them as your parents and role models. Our love and prayers to all of you in this time of sorrow. We are sorry we cannot be there in person to honor Kay. The Hirschs

Fred and Judy Hirsch - December 23, 2010 at 06:32 PM

KZ

“ My sympathies to the Merrill family.

Kendall Zeigler-Woog - December 23, 2010 at 04:03 PM

MJ

“ Thinking of you all at this time of loss. With love, Melinda and family

Melinda (Daley) Jacobson - December 22, 2010 at 11:27 PM