

**On the Path of
the Perfecting Caregiver**

Memorial Tribute

Marsha Lynn Pancsofar

(1949 – 2025)

August 5, 2025

Ernest L. Pancsofar

Nadya Pancsofar

Natyra Pancsofar





1949 - 2025

Marsha Lynn Pancsofar passed away peacefully at her home in Columbia, CT on March 22, 2025. Marsha was born in Murphysboro, Illinois as the oldest of five children (Kathie Grob, Edgar Brantley, Barbara Troutman, Thomas Brantley) of Helen and Clifford Brantley. She followed her love of learning to complete her Bachelor's degree at Southern Illinois University and, as a Special Education teacher, was active in the disability rights movement of the 1970's. She was a teacher in one of the first schools to be opened in Southern Illinois after educational rights were guaranteed by law to students with disabilities, and she went on to be active in the independent living movement for adults with disabilities. Marsha maintained her commitment to human rights, social justice, and peace activism throughout her life and she raised her daughters to be critical thinkers committed, as she was, to celebrating diversity and advocating for equity and inclusion.

Marsha was a talented crafter and loved giving gifts to friends and family. She was a creative problem-solver and never found a piece of furniture on the side of the road that she couldn't breathe new life into. She left her mark in countless creations big and small. Marsha was also a

passionate researcher of family history and genealogy, and enjoyed creating art and keepsake books that honored her ancestors' lives. She celebrated the mystical and was always eager to explore ideas that went counter to traditional ways of thinking. She discovered yoga, meditation, upcycling, and thrifting in her early adulthood and maintained these practices throughout her life. She was the biggest champion for the ones she loved and celebrated and encouraged everything that was special and unique about a person. Marsha's family is proud to carry on her legacy of compassion, creativity, and love of learning.

Marsha is survived by Ernest Pancsofar, her husband of 48 years and loving and devoted care partner on her journey with Alzheimer's disease, daughters Nadya Pancsofar and Natyra Pancsofar, grandson Leo Schmidt, and son-in-law, Randy Schmidt. One of Marsha's greatest moments came when she was reunited with her birth son, Jay Snyder. She cherished having Jay and his children, Ariel and Joshua, in her life. She enjoyed a rich, 50+ year devoted friendship with Alria Warner. In lieu of flowers, please create something special and unique in her honor and share it with someone you love.



Words/Phrases That Connect Well To:

Fulfill **M**ent

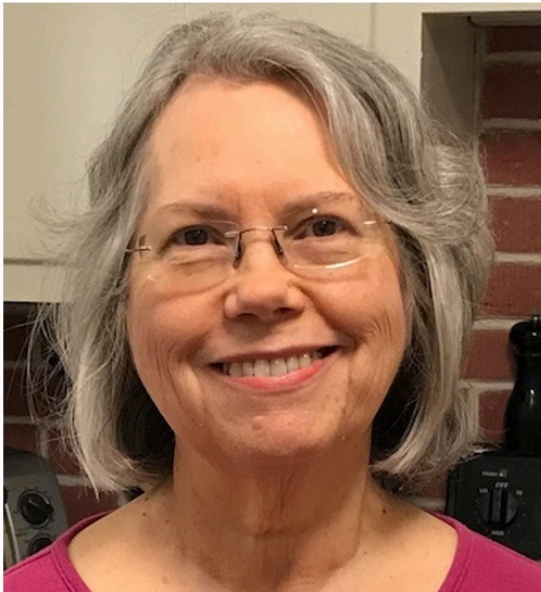
Authentic

D **R**eamer

Spiritual

Researcher of
Family **H**istory

Cre **A**tive



Com **P**assionate

Depend **A**ble

Valued Prese **N**ce

Suc **C**essful

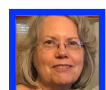
Curious **S**

L **O**ved

Family

Dedic **A**ted

Dete **R**mined



Fulfill **M**ent

League o **F** Women Voters

SI **U** - C Master's Program

Nuc **L** ear Freeze Movement

Friendship with Alria

Resp **I** te Care

Genea **L** ogy Searches

Vol **L** unteer – Porter School

Wo **M** en Church

Special Time **E** with Leo - grandson

Childre **N** : Nadya – Jay – Natyra

Birth Paren **T** Support Group

S oul Mate - Ernie



Leo's presence
would always
bring a huge smile



Natyra – Jay – Marsha



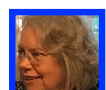
Randy – Nadya – Leo



Marsha – Natyra



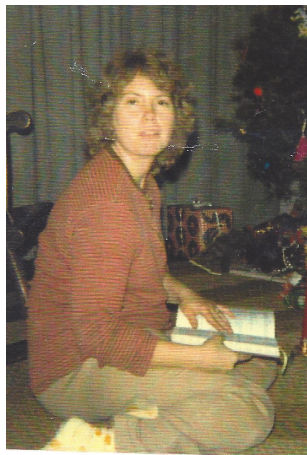
A reminder of our
love together





Authentic

Many years ago in Murphysboro, Illinois
A young baby was born – a girl, not a boy.
Right away, she was destined for many, great things
Sure to be prepared for whatever life brings.
Her features were perfect; not a hair out of place
And a wonderful smile just lit up her face.
Some day she's going to live far from there



Bound for Oregon, Ohio & Connecticut, where
I was fortunate to have her by my side ...
Really lucky to go along for the ride
Through many adventures of many a kind
Her strength and wisdom helped me find
Direction and purpose in my life
As I could not ask for a better wife.
Years have passed – seventy in all



“Hi, Ernie. Let
me introduce
myself to you:
Marsha Lynn
Brantley. I’m
going to be
your future
wife!”

Since her birth and I do recall
Each day when our love begins anew
Very important people in her life who
Enrich us all beyond measure
Noting how they give us pleasure
Today for all us to find
You are certainly ONE OF A KIND!



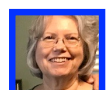
DRreamer

To Marsha – “The Dreamer”

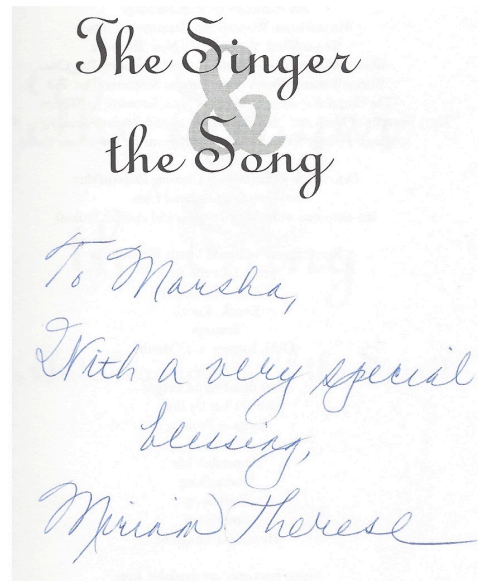
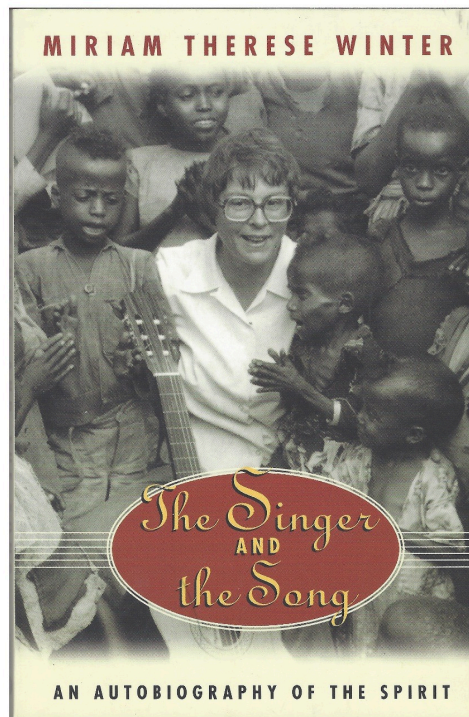
The inner workings of the mind
Produce a dream that's one of a kind.
No one can tell its meaning and plot
Except for the one whose mind it sought
To enter that calm, still night -
To give the dreamer a clear insight
Into the workings of the human side
As she lives her life, it can be a guide
To figure out what's happened before
And in her life she can explore
The mysteries of the recent past
And make each dream forever last.

ELP – February – 1994

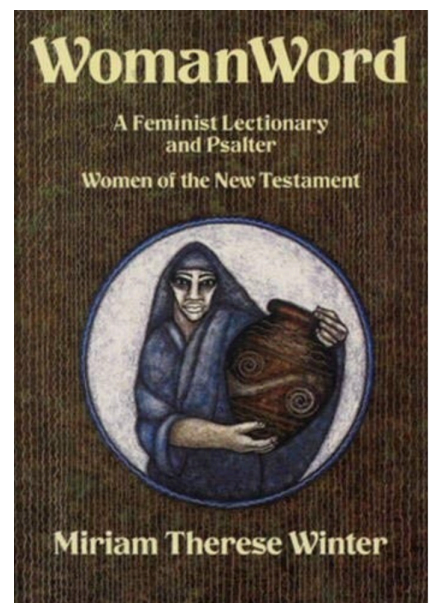
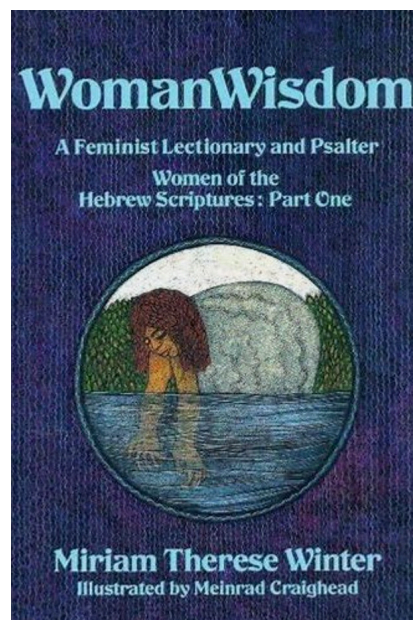
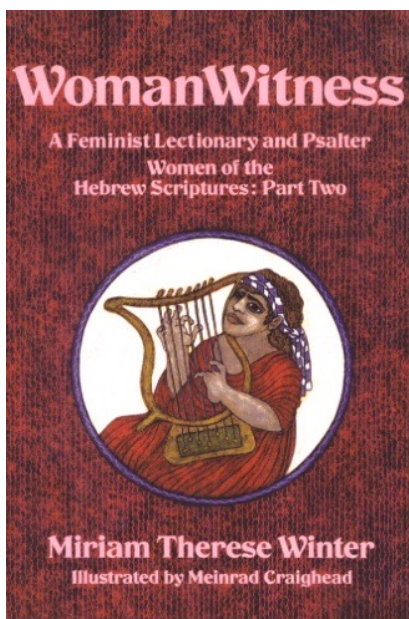
*Those who dream by night
in the dusty recesses of
their minds, wake in the
day to find that it was
vanity: but the dreamers of
the day are dangerous ... ,
for they may act on
their dreams with open
eyes, to make them
possible. T. E. Lawrence*



Spiritual



Marsha admired the work of this spiritual leader especially her music and choice of lyrics.



Researcher of Family History



Unto the Seventh Generation

Many many years ago,
when buffalo, trees, antelope and bear
were plentiful upon the land,
when the waters ran free and clear,
and the fish multiplied
by the millions,
the First Peoples' chiefs and elders taught:
In all of your dealings, in every decision
personal and communal,
consider the impact
of what you do and how much you take
upon the 7th generation to come. ...
[exact source of this quote not found]



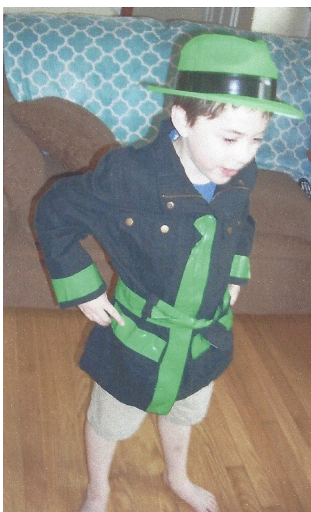
CreA^Ative



The Witch, the Lion and the Wardrobe



Buzz Lightyear with Mr. & Mrs. Potato Head



Super Sleuth



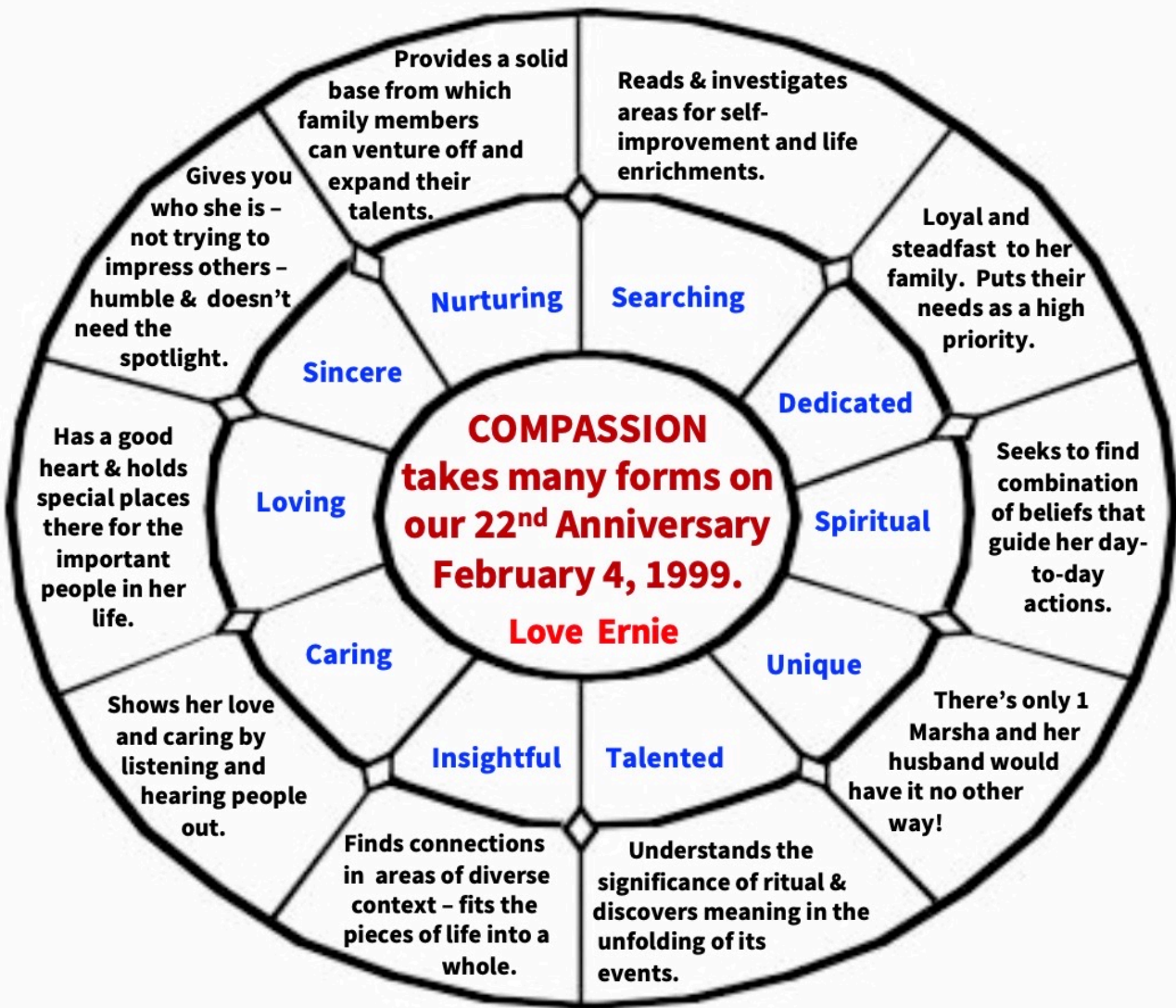
Marsha's creativity shone forth in her Halloween costumes coordinating with what Leo was wearing.



Halloween - 2009



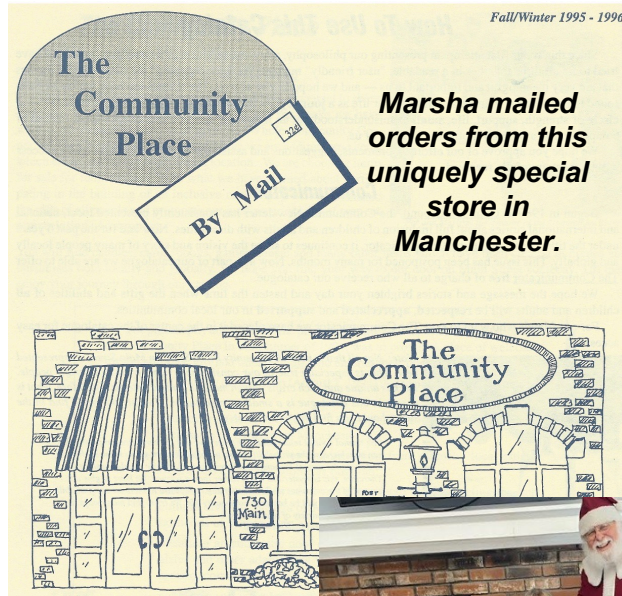
ComPassionate



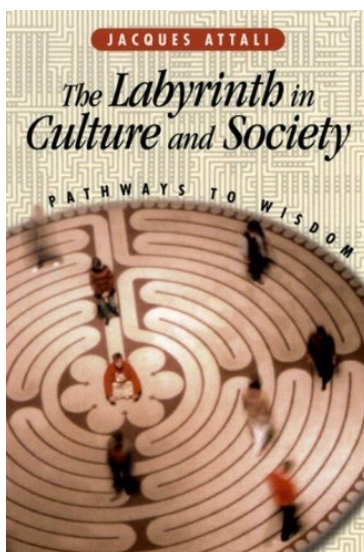
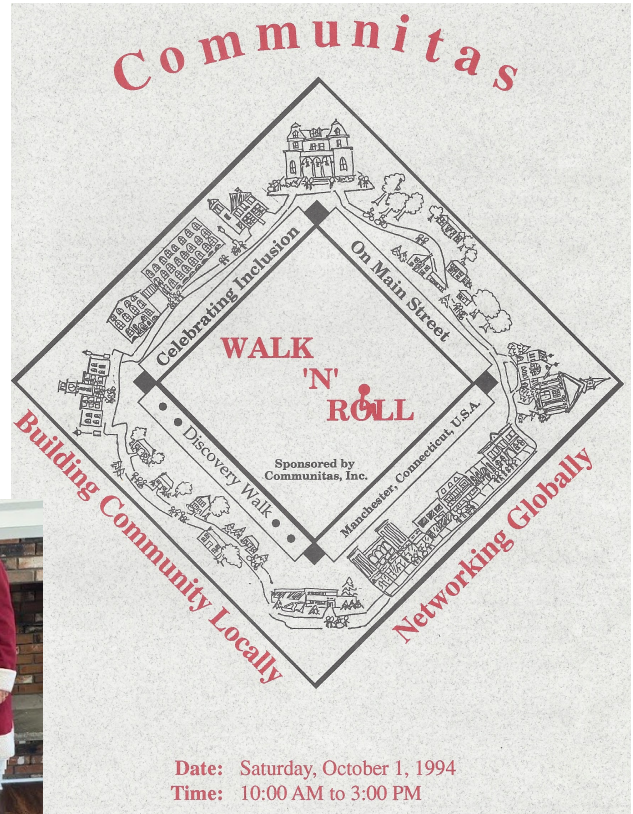
Compassion is not a relationship between the healer and the wounded. It's a relationship between equals. Only when we know our own darkness well can we be present with the darkness of others. Compassion becomes real when we recognize our shared humanity. Pema Chödrön



DependAble



Bev, Pat & George



... the labyrinth of the future will have to be confronted alone. This will require us to accept our own peculiarities with self-tolerance, never judging ourselves by others' opinions of us. We must learn to do what needs to be done with knowledge of how to live with ourselves, to listen to ourselves, love ourselves, without fear of being forgotten by the rest of the world.

Quote retrieved by Marsha on May 4 2005, and this book added to Ernie's reading list on June 24, 2025.



Valued Presence

Words extracted from the many cards received
from Ernie and Marsha's friends



I am **heartbroken** and **saddened**.
Yes, I will have **happy memories**
and you will be **dearly missed**.
You were a **beloved wife** and shared
your **beautiful gifts**.
It has been an **honor** to **witness** the
extraordinary way you lived your life.

May your spirit continue to heal all
who read these words.
We say **goodbye** to your spirit,
knowing that **death is not the end**.
I'll be **thinking of you** every day
as you continue to bring me **peace**
and comfort. ELP



SucCessful

From 2003

What is Success?

Success is being married for 26 years
To one who shares my hopes and fears
We've been through many ups and downs
Mostly with a smile but never with frowns.
I think that there might be in store
Another 26 years and maybe more.

We have two daughters we give our love
Presented to us from high above.
We are proud of the values each does hold
Like saving a kitten from the icy cold.
I couldn't be prouder of both the girls
As they become adults and their life unfurls.

Success can mean so many things
Like lots of money and a dozen rings.
But peace of mind
is hard to find
Unless you're wed
to one whose led
A life like Marsha and Ernie
Who together are on their journey
To who knows where
As long as they share
It together with peace and harmony
As they celebrate their anniversary.

ELP

Let the Mystery Be

(Iris DeMent)

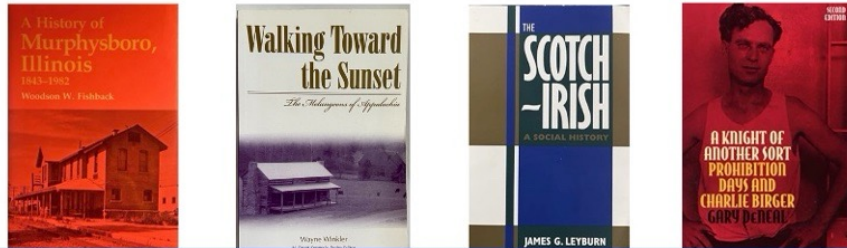
*Everybody is wondering what and where
They all came from.*

*Everybody is worrying about where they're going to go
When the whole thing's done.*

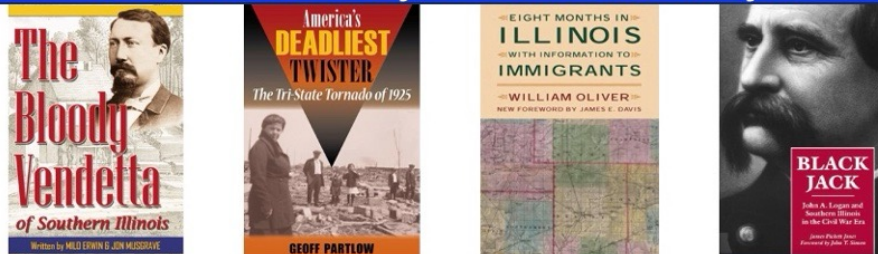
*But no one knows for certain and so it's all the same to me,
I think I'll just let the mystery be.*



CuriousS



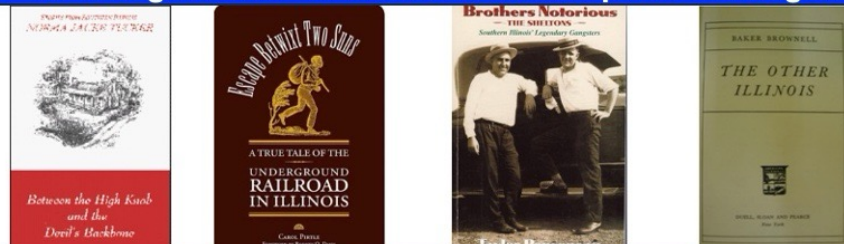
Marsha was extremely interested in the history of



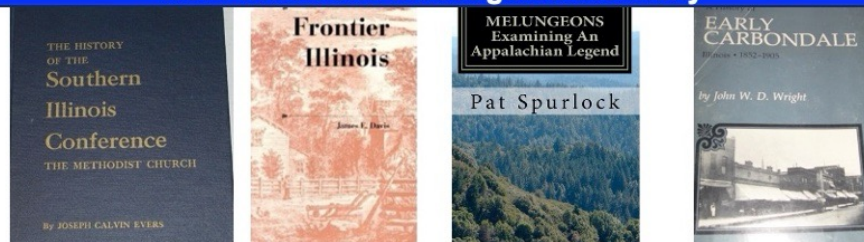
Southern Illinois and the journey that early ancestors



took to get there. These books are samples she bought



from which she investigated the many



cultural influences contributing to her own upbringing.



Loved



67 is a great age to be
for the matriarch of this family.
Your genes are rich from ages gone by.
You are shaped by memories that tie
You to Germans & Scots & Native Americans, too.
They all contribute to make you
The sum of all their wisdom and grace:
The most wonderful person in the human race.

ELP



**Great Grandma Nina
with Natyra and Nadya**



Marsha and Her Siblings

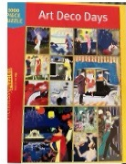
4 generations:



Family

On March 15th, 2025, Marsha's family met with her to say their good-byes. Ernie captured key features of that gathering.

Butterfl **I** es and Flowers



Art **D** eco Puzzle

Littl **E** Prince



S cratch Tickets

Robert **O** 's Log Cabin



F ocus on Marsha
(Mom/Nana)



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Fa **M** ily Gathering

Photo **A** lbum



Siste **R** s



Omni **C** hord



Claudia's **H** elp



DedicAteD

I could substitute Marsha's name for Rosalynn Carter in the tribute her husband gave on the event of her death in 2023.

Rosalynn was my equal partner in everything I ever accomplished," former President Jimmy Carter said in a statement. "She gave me wise guidance and encouragement when I needed it. As long as Rosalynn was in the world, I always knew somebody loved and supported me.

Where's Leo?

Words by Poppy
Quilt Squares by Nana

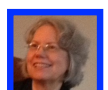


I think I'll go inside this house
and rest awhile today.
Buy first I'll watch two dogs outside
run and jump and play!



I wonder what you're thinking
33 years ago that day.
I wonder about the wisdom
you are going to say.
Time goes by quickly –
grab it by the tail.
Someone snapped this picture
and it reminds without fail
About the beauty and kindness in your face
And your presence, which is full of grace. ELP

Written on November 5, 2021
upon uncovering this photo in
its current resting place.

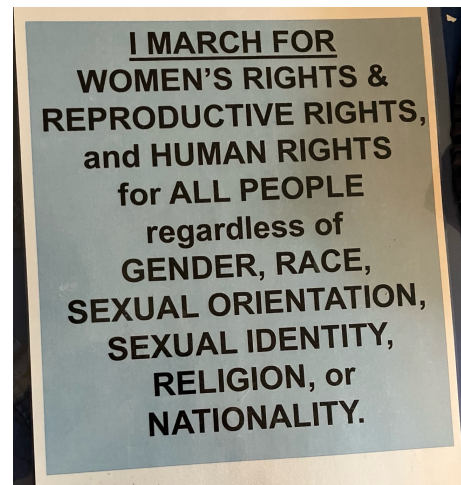


Detemined

Happy 68th Birthday

As you March on in life
As a mother and a beautiful wife,
Other roles are in store for you
As you help set our nation anew.

Much has to be done by 68-year olds
Who are young enough &
capable & bold
To right the wrongs and begin to show
That our country can be kind and continue
to grow.



SIU Solicitation Permit
University Housing
Southern Illinois
University at Carbondale

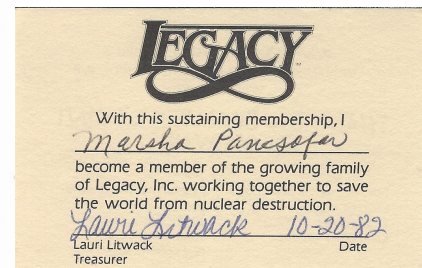
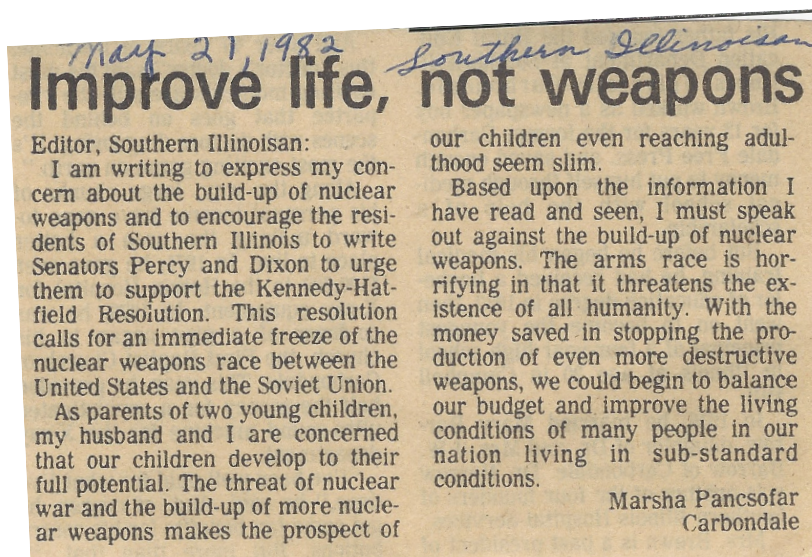
Solicitor: Marsha Pancsofar

Product or Enterprise: Southern Illinoisans for a Nuclear Freeze

is authorized to conduct fund raising, canvassing, solicitation, vending, and allied advertising (line out those not applicable) activities in the on campus housing areas indicated hereon and under the conditions noted in accordance with University Housing Procedure 1368:
To circulate petition at ET no later than 8:30 pm.

AUTHORIZED HOUSING AREAS
Evergreen Terrace
Southern Hills
Group Housing
Thompson Point
University Park
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(Line out those not applicable)

Permit Expires April 22, 1982
jugason
for the Director of Housing



What's Next?



Processing the Loss of a Loved One

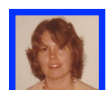
First, it's a life-time experience
Of memories, the order of which, jumbles in my mind.
There is no "getting over it"
When missing a one-of-a-kind.

The solitude can be both welcoming and bring sadness
When I don't see you on the other side of the room.
The silence allows for fewer distractions
And can even lessen some of the gloom.

You had a rough journey
Held in dementia's grip.
Yet, you were always graceful
On this unexpected trip.

I learned a great deal
By being by your side.
When my time comes a callin'
Please come back to be my guide.

Time passes by
In oh so many ways.
I'm glad I was here to witness
The closing of your days. ELP





Honor the Memory
[naturemandala.com]

