



Nancy "Polly" Tarwater Howser

April 6, 1944 - June 23, 2019

Born on April 6, 1944 in Rockwood, Tennessee, Nancy Penelope "Polly" Tarwater Howser died on June 23, 2019 at home surrounded by her family.

The only child of James "Jim" L. and Nancy R. Tarwater, Polly was an informal ambassador for her East Tennessee hometown of Harriman and its people. Surrounded by a close-knit family growing up, she nurtured lifetime relationships with aunts, uncles, and cousins, and passed her strong love for family to her children and grandchildren. She was married to R. Davis Howser for 52 years and was the mother of Nancy H. Oudet (Severin) of Denver, Colorado, James D. Howser (Ashley) of Atlanta, Georgia and Rebecca S. Howser of Columbia. She had four grandchildren, Davis M. Oudet and Caroline G. Oudet of Denver and Thomas J. Howser and Penelope C. Howser of Atlanta. Her grandchildren affectionately knew her as "GrandPolly." She is also survived by her sister-in-law, Judith J. Clifton of Irmo and many loving cousins.

A graduate of Salem Academy in 1962 and Duke University in 1966, Polly served in leadership positions for her alma maters throughout her life. She was the Columbia Chairman of Duke University's Carolina Challenge Committee to raise scholarship funds for qualified South Carolina students and for many years interviewed prospective students in South Carolina.

Polly's most fulfilling role with Duke was as Coach K's 'sixth man' for the Duke men's basketball team. She knew stats, positions, strategy, and recruiting reports, as well as many players over five decades. She attended every game she could, including NCAA tournaments and end of season banquets.

Throughout her fifty-two years in Columbia, Polly was a respected community leader, serving as a founding member of Columbia Green, a member of the Board of Directors for Historic Columbia and a Board member of the State Museum Foundation. She was President of the Junior League of Columbia, a member of Columbia Garden Club, and Chair of the Board of Trustees of Hammond School from 1990 to 1993, the only woman

ever elected to this post. Additionally, Polly served on the Board of Roane Hosiery, Inc., a company based in Harriman that was co-founded by her father. She was a member of First Presbyterian Church.

During her tenure on the Hammond Board, Polly chaired the search committee for a Headmaster, ultimately selecting Dr. Herb Barks. She was especially appreciative and gratified by the impact Dr. Barks had on Hammond, its students, and the Columbia community. Because of her devotion and exceptional expertise in guiding the Board at a pivotal and challenging time, Polly was named a Life Trustee in 2018.

Aside from her many contributions, Polly was a true and genuine friend to many. She enjoyed good humor, hospitality, anything French, Watts Bar Lake, and a good Cotes du Rhone. Her love of life was infectious. Her friends and family were enchanted by

her Tennessee accent and her unique and non-judgmental way of observing life. Polly's gracious warmth and gentle strength sustained her family.

In keeping with her family tradition, graveside services will be held in Oak Grove Cemetery in Rockwood Tennessee at 11:00 a.m. on Friday, June 28, 2019. In celebration of her life, a visitation will be held at her home, 4715 Portobello Road, Columbia from 5 to 7 p.m. on Wednesday, June 26, 2019. Shives Funeral Home, Trenholm Road Chapel, is assisting the family.

The family suggests that in lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to Hammond School, 854 Galway Lane, Columbia, SC 29209; the V Foundation for Cancer Research, 14600 Weston Parkway, Cary, NC 27513; or the Emily K Center, 904 West Chapel Hill Street, Durham, NC 27701.

Cemetery

Oak Grove Cemetery
212 Rockwood Street
Rockwood, TN, 37854

Events

JUN 26 Reception 05:00PM - 07:00PM

Roy Davis Howser, III
4715 Portobello Road, Columbia,, SC, US, 29206

Comments



“ Dear Dave, Nan, Jim and Becca, It is today just one week that Polly passed away, surrounded by you all, her happy family. From far away we are with you and share your sadness. Polly came in our lives not long ago but long enough to be deeply sorry and missing her : Welcoming, optimistic with a great sense of bringing family and friends together. Broadminded she was able to put everybody at ease. We are happy to have known her and we recall many memories with warmth. Our thoughts go to you all.
Patricia and Martial

Patricia Oudet - June 30, 2019 at 10:29 AM



“ Susi and Robert McWilliams purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Mrs. Nancy "Polly" Howser.



Susi and Robert McWilliams - June 26, 2019 at 11:06 AM



“ Dave and all Mrs. Howser's family:

This quote attributed to Tecumseh comes to mind: "Live your life that the fear of death can never enter your heart."

Jeff Brooker, MD - June 25, 2019 at 09:31 PM



“ I was blessed to be teaching at Hammond when Polly Howser had children there. I taught her son Jim in second grade. What a wonderful lady she was. He was a dear child and I loved him and Polly. She did many great things for Hammond. And she was a great lady who did so many great things. She will be greatly missed. I am sending prayers and love to all of her family. Thank the Lord for wonderful people like Polly Howser who made your world a better place.

MaryAnn Crews - June 25, 2019 at 05:46 PM



“ Ms Polly was my favorite basketball fan to talk shop with. Especially Duke basketball. No other woman that I have met could talk basketball like Ms Polly. I loved talking with her about the new recruits for Duke Basketball and the upcoming basketball season. She would also tell me stories about Coach K and the Duke basketball banquets.

Chad Jones - June 25, 2019 at 04:17 PM



“ we love you Dave. Please be easy with you and rest a little.

jake moore - June 25, 2019 at 11:43 AM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Mrs. Nancy "Polly" Howser.



June 25, 2019 at 10:10 AM



“ Our thoughts and prayers are with your family.

Chuck Plowden - June 24, 2019 at 07:55 PM



“ Florist Choice Bouquet was purchased for the family of Mrs. Nancy "Polly" Howser.



June 24, 2019 at 06:47 PM



“ To the entire Howser family:

All of the Cullums share in your heartbreak at Polly's passing. We do, however, celebrate a life truly well lived and take solace in the fact that her suffering is over. She was one of my mother's very closest friends. She was one of a very few people who changed the course and trajectory of Hammond School. The impact that she had on Hammond and her community in general is admirable. We can all only hope that we might each make such a mark on our community as Polly did! We share in your grief and sadness now and in the coming days. "Well done, Thy good and faithful servant!"

With deepest sympathy,
Merritt and Chrissy Cullum

Birmingham, AL

Merritt Cullum - June 24, 2019 at 06:17 PM



“ The Staff at the Washington Duke Inn & Golf Club purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Mrs. Nancy "Polly" Howser.



The Staff at the Washington Duke Inn & Golf Club - June 24, 2019 at 03:40 PM



“ Guiding Light Bouquet was purchased for the family of Mrs. Nancy "Polly" Howser.



June 24, 2019 at 10:37 AM