



Cheryl Mitchell

February 14, 1944 - February 5, 2021

Cheryl (Lauffer) Mitchell, 76, of Oskaloosa passed away peacefully on Friday, February 5, 2021, at Mahaska Health Partnership in Oskaloosa, Iowa.

Cheryl was born to Charles and Leona (Prickett) Lauffer on February 14, 1944 in Fort Madison, Iowa. She attended elementary, middle, and high school in Denmark, Iowa, where she graduated salutatorian in 1961. Her interest in teaching led her to Northeast Missouri State Teachers College (now Truman State University) and she graduated with a degree in Elementary Education in 1964. She shared her love of learning as a first grade teacher in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, for five years and in Ames, Iowa, for two years.

Cheryl married Jerry Mitchell on November 24, 1967. They had two daughters and in 1975, the family moved to Oskaloosa where she pursued her passion for helping women find the perfect outfit as a salesperson at clothing stores such as Spurgeon's and Snider's before embarking on a new chapter as a bookkeeper at Bloom Builders where she worked until she retired. Since the age of 10, Cheryl played saxophone. Her musical talents took her to the 1965 World's Fair where she played bass clarinet in a clarinet choir. Her love of music continued to flourish during her years in Oskaloosa. Some of her fondest memories were playing saxophone in the Oskaloosa Community Band for more than 30 years and in William Penn College Community Band for the rest of her life. She also enjoyed reading, sewing, and collecting dolls.

Cheryl's surviving family includes daughters, Kimber (Tom) Van Heukelom and Kathleen (Kalli Phillips) Mitchell; sister Carol Lauffer; brother Wayne Lauffer; and faithful family friend Larry Moore.

In death, Cheryl joins her daughter, Kristen, mother, father, husband, and beloved cat Felix who was her constant companion for 16 years.

Private funeral services will be held with burial at the Fairview Cemetery in Fort Madison, IA. The family will hold a memorial celebration for friends and family at a later date. Memorials and cards of condolence can be sent to the family at the funeral chapel and messages of condolences can be left on Cheryl's Tribute Wall. Langkamp Funeral Chapel has been entrusted with Cheryl's final arrangements.

Cemetery Details

Fairview Cemetery

Fort Madison, IA

Tribute Wall



“ *Cheryl Mitchell*

October 05, 2023 at 11:57 PM



“ *i am sorry for your loss. i used to be in city band before i moved to japan. cheryl was such a staple of the summers i spent playing on the bandstand. she was so kind. may she rest in peace.*

stephani moore - February 09, 2021 at 10:04 PM



“ *I am so sorry for your loss. Cheryl & I met in city band and became good friends. I have missed not being able to play together, laugh together & talk together. She will be greatly missed.*

Gidget Utterback - February 09, 2021 at 06:38 PM

“ Cheryl used to say she was my “oldest friend.” She remembered hearing her mother ask my grandmother if Betsey had given birth and my Grandmother Timpe saying that I was a day old! We attended the same church and Sunday school and when a new band director came to the Denmark School District, when she was in seventh grade and I was in fourth, we became part of the same band for the next six years where we became really good friends. We loved music and both of us learned solos, played in ensembles every year, and were part of the band. As the older one, she “chose” me as a friend, and I was always quite pleased that I “made the cut.” We spent so much time talking, kindred spirits whose goals were college educations and teaching as a career. Once she left for college, we kept in touch through letters, and when she was home, I made sure to see her. We both married in 1967; she was in my September wedding, and I was in her November wedding. She loved teaching, and I was always sorry she was never able to renew her certification, as the classroom is where she loved to be. During the years I visited Denmark while living in Texas, we’d usually see one another, whether I drove to Oskaloosa or she came to Denmark; we both were busy but made time for one another. We both had two children, so that added to our conversations. Once I retired, and especially after I moved to Columbia, MO, I began driving to Oskaloosa to see her, and we always had a great time. We’d talk about our years in Denmark, and she always had some questions about people we knew. When my mother was well, Cheryl used to call her if she had some burning question, especially about older folks, as Dad could answer if Mom couldn’t. We often lamented that I should have asked him many questions but didn’t realize at the time it would be important some day. When Covid 19 reared its ugly head, we were always sorry I couldn’t visit because we really missed seeing one another. Phone calls helped but weren’t quite enough. I last talked to her after my January birthday, and she lamented that she didn’t have a card to send, but I told her that after giving/sending me a card for at least 60 years there absolutely wasn’t a problem! Cheryl was a wonderful friend, teacher, and mom, and all of us benefited from her calm demeanor and

understanding nature. I'll miss her so much.

Frances Hasenclever Smith - February 09, 2021 at 04:03 AM

SC

“ I met Cheryl in City Band when I moved to Oskaloosa in 2007. She then played for me in the William Penn band. Her love of music was contagious and her smile and friendship were a great treasure. There were times when she was not feeling well that she told me I could replace her. You could not replace Cheryl Mitchell!!!! I told her that many, many times. I am deeply saddened at the loss of my friend. To her family... Especially her daughter's... She always spoke of you with such pride and love. I hope you know what a special mom you had. May God Bless you and comfort you. I know she is playing in Heaven!

Scott Cressley - February 08, 2021 at 07:38 PM

IR

“ Kim, Kathy and families. I am so sorry for your loss. Your mother was a wonderful friend. We enjoyed many years of playing saxophone together in City Band.
Ila Ruby

Ila Ruby - February 08, 2021 at 01:01 PM

KM

“ Kerby and Evelyn Mitchell purchased the Country Basket Blooms for the family of Cheryl Mitchell.



Kerby and Evelyn Mitchell - February 08, 2021 at 12:34 PM

JM

“ Kathleen - I'm sorry to hear of your mom's death. I hope you have many happy memories that live on in your heart and that you can draw from remember to her with great fondness and affection. May her memory be a blessing.

Jessie M - February 08, 2021 at 10:54 AM

CV

“ Cliff And Leilani VandeWall lit a candle in memory of Cheryl Mitchell



Cliff and Leilani VandeWall - February 07, 2021 at 09:54 PM

JD

“ Jerry, Gary, and Dirk purchased the Large Basket Garden for the family of Cheryl Mitchell.



Jerry, Gary, and Dirk - February 06, 2021 at 03:51 PM