



Gretchen Zikeli Corker

February 5, 1942 - March 8, 2022

Gretchen Zikeli Corker passed away peacefully on March 8, 2022 at the forever age of 79...wink wink. Gretchen was born in Ellwood City, PA on February 5, 1942. She graduated from Lincoln High School then proceeded to West Virginia University where she graduated with a degree in Social Work. Gretchen worked as a social worker in Wheeling, WV where her main focus was caring for abandoned newborns. In 1976, Gretchen and her family made the move to Gadsden, AL where she began a 32 year career as a revered yet sometimes feared Catholic school teacher. She continued as a substitute teacher for St. James well beyond retirement.

Gretchen was a devoted member of St. James Catholic Church and enjoyed singing in the choir for many years and was also a frequent and eloquent lector. Her favorite pastimes included reading everything the library had to offer, pilates with Jane, studying genealogy of the Zikeli family with her cousin Bets, cheering on the Pittsburgh Steelers with local Steeler fans, attending Gadsden Titan soccer, and traveling with Bernie and her grandchildren. And an occasional "glass" of wine.

Gretchen was preceded in death by her parents, John and Mitzie Zikeli, and her husband, Bernard Calwell Corker. She is survived by her four children; Sean, Lesley, Rachel Elizabeth, Samantha, and her beloved dog, Baxter. Sean, a graduate of Jacksonville State University and Gadsden State Community College, is a nurse in Collinsville, AL. Sean and his wife, Tara, their son, Dylan, and daughter and son-in-law, Anna Lee and Jacob Putman,

preside in Douglas, Alabama. Lesley, an Auburn mechanical engineer graduate, is employed by The Coca-Cola Company in Atlanta, GA. Rachel Elizabeth "Liz", an Auburn business graduate, lives in Grand Rapids, MI, with husband, Steve, daughter, Lilly, and son, Zeke. Samantha, a Mississippi State graduate, teaches math and coaches soccer at Gadsden City High School. Special thanks to the nurses and doctors of the Critical Care Unit at Riverview Regional Medical Center and their compassionate care for Gretchen. A funeral mass will be held at St. James Catholic Church on Saturday, March 12, 2022 at 12:00pm with lunch to follow in Seton Hall. Visitation will be open starting at 11:00am. In lieu of flowers please make donations in Gretchen's name to St. James Catholic School (www.stjamesgadsden.org/giving/online-donations) or Gadsden City Soccer Program (1917 Black Creek Pkwy, Gadsden, AL 35904).

Previous Events

Visitation

MAR 12. 11:00 AM (CT)

St. James Catholic Church
Gadsden, AL

Memorial Service

MAR 12. 12:00 PM (CT)

St. James Catholic Church
Gadsden, AL

Tribute Wall

SO

“ I taught with Gretchen many years ago at St. James School and she was an excellent and dedicated teacher. She and Bernie were devoted parents and very supportive of the school and the students. I will remember her fondly and will be praying for her and her family.
Sister Treva Heinberg, osb

Sister Treva Heinberg, osb - March 11, 2022 at 03:36 PM



“ Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Gretchen Zikeli Corker.



March 11, 2022 at 10:59 AM

PJ

“ Sean and Lesley this is Phil Phillips. I just thought the world of both of your parents. The nicest people you could ever meet. Yes, Mrs. Corker was feared at school where she taught but she so much loved the kids she once washed my mouth out with soap she knew I would do it if not there was punishment at home. When The soap went in my mouth she smiled and laughed and actually I thought it was funny and I knew she wanted me to be my best. I admired her and the Corker fam great people loving people! God bless Berney and Gretchen!

Phil Phillips Jr - March 10, 2022 at 09:08 PM



“ *Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet was purchased for the family of Gretchen Zikeli Corker.* ”



March 10, 2022 at 03:33 PM



“ *Jane Patton purchased the Country Basket Blooms for the family of Gretchen Zikeli Corker.* ”



Jane Patton - March 10, 2022 at 11:47 AM



“ *Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Gretchen Zikeli Corker.* ”



March 10, 2022 at 07:29 AM



“ *Florist Choice Bouquet was purchased for the family of Gretchen Zikeli Corker.* ”



March 09, 2022 at 11:06 PM

JB

“Gretchen was blessed with a fantastic mother, Mitzi Zikeli who was our leader at Girl Scout Camp and taught us so much. I graduated with Gretchen who had the great happy personality as her mom. Sending sympathy to her family. She was so proud of you and loved you all so very much. You were also lucky to have Gretchen for a mother.

Jessie Swogger Berkebile - March 09, 2022 at 06:51 PM

LB

“Gretchen and I shared many beautiful days and weekends watching Amy and Sam travel all over the States playing soccer. Without her the trips would have been long and tiresome. It was a joy to know her and raise our girls together. I love you Gretchen watch over us and out in a good word to the bug guy.
Love to family, Lee Britton

Lee Britton - March 09, 2022 at 06:42 PM



“Gretchen and I worked together for many years in the Pilates Reformer program both at Gold's Gym and then at Absolute Fitness. She also loved the classes both at Gold's and Absolute such as Zumba Gold, Friday morning group pilates at Gold's Gym, Silver Sneakers and the Ageless classes. Her dedication and smile will be the things I will always remember about her. I would always remind her that she was so much stronger than she thought she was. And she proved it in so many ways. Rest now, Gretchen. You have earned it by living this wonderful life. I will treasure those memories of the fun times we had in those classes. Jane Patton

Jane Patton - March 09, 2022 at 05:29 PM



I will remember Gretchen. I am so sorry to learn of her death. May we all take an interest in this, bless and love her, and prepare to meet God.

Richard Hollerman - March 10, 2022 at 02:16 PM

BL

“ *The memories that I have of Gretchen and me growing up will fill more than the space I've been given here!! We were a close-knit family and from fun times spent at Lake Erie with aunts, uncles, and cousins, family reunions for the past 60+ years, Luther League Conventions via traveling by bus, spending a few weekends at WVU with her and Bernie, our most exciting trip to Transylvania with 5 other cousins and she and Bernie coming up to see the Cherry Blossoms. (The past few years the Cherry Blossoms haven't been cooperating!) We shared a lot of memories, some not so happy but the happy ones sure outnumbered the not-so-good ones. Cousin, I will miss you, I can't imagine what it will be like not talking to you a couple of times a week. Give those that are waiting for you in heaven a hug from me. We will meet again in a better place. I love you, Gretch! Betts*

Betsy Laitinen - March 09, 2022 at 04:53 PM