



Mrs. Jean Parker Kelly

April 30, 1942 - June 17, 2018

Jean Kelly, a longtime resident of the Willow Bend community in Plano, died at home on June 17, 2018. Jean was born April 30, 1942, to Brinson and Ollie Parker. She was raised in the small East Texas town of Beckville where the Parkers' ran a three-generation general store and ranching business. Jean enjoyed a childhood filled with warmth from parents, grandparents and numerous aunts. She graduated from Beckville High as valedictorian in 1960. She majored in journalism at the University of Oklahoma, her parents' alma mater, and excelled with honors: Top 10 Freshmen Women, Mortar Board, Top 10 Outstanding Seniors, and Phi Beta Kappa. She was also an active member of the Delta Gamma sorority. She spent her summers working as a writer for the The Panola Watchman and as a camp counselor at Camp Mystic.

Jean married J.C. Kelly of Carthage, TX in 1964. J.C., a graduate of the University of Texas, was also a journalism major, and they began their careers together first in Sioux City, Idaho and then in Omaha, Nebraska where Jean was a reporter at the Omaha World Herald. Jean and J.C. moved to Dallas in 1968 where she signed on as general assignments writer at the Dallas Morning News. She was one of the paper's first female writers. She went on to become a religion writer, trailblazing that beat.

Jean began a 10-year career with the public relations firm Hill & Knowlton in 1980. Many years later, J.C. became National Sales Director for Adweek Magazine and the couple moved to New York City. Jean enjoying her time in NYC, especially Wednesday outings to the farmer's market in Union Square.

Friends and family recall Jean as a smart, warm and inviting hostess with a penchant for family, good recipes, and all things Southern. The couple's Texas/OU weekend parties were legendary and a fall highlight for friends, family and neighbors alike.

Jean spent her later years in service for others. She received her certification as a Master Gardener in 1992. She created many gardens thereafter, including the perennial garden for her Willow Bend neighborhood that she lovingly maintained for the next 25 years. She was also instrumental in the management of Youngblood Cemetery, her hometown's 150-year-old independent cemetery. She was a committed volunteer with Dallas Junior Forum. She served as co-chair for Frisco Family Services, cooking for Ronald McDonald House, Hope's Door, Ebby House and Interfaith Family Services. She was an active 30-year member of Preston Hollow Presbyterian Church. Her husband of 49 years, J.C. Kelly and son, Trent Corbett Kelly preceded her in death. Survivors include her son, Ryan Butler Kelly and wife, Angela and children, Carson Patrick Kelly and Ava Sophia Kelly of McKinney; sister, Gale Bollinger of Oklahoma City; niece, Caroline Bollinger and husband, Thomas Johnstone and children, Peter and Parker of Brooklyn, NY; sister-in-law, Shirley Mann of Houston; niece, Kelly Hebert and husband, John Hebert and children, Luke, Remy and Reese Ann of Houston, and nephew, Kirk Mann and wife, Karen and children, David and Danielle of Houston.

A memorial service will be held Wednesday, June 27, 11:00, at Preston Hollow Presbyterian Church Chapel. Burial will be July 3, 11:00, at Youngblood Cemetery, Beckville, TX under the direction of Hawthorn Funeral Home. The family asks that memorials be made to Frisco Family Services, P.O. Box 1387, Frisco, TX 75034, or Youngblood Cemetery Endowment, P.O. Box 163, Beckville, TX 75631.

Cemetery Details

Youngblood Cemetery

4748 FM 124 W
Beckville, TX 75631

Previous Events

Graveside Service

JUL 3. 11:00 AM (CT)

Youngblood Cemetery
4748 FM 124 W
Beckville, TX 75631

Tribute Wall

JD

“ June 5, 2019
Georgetown, Texas

I am a sorority sister of Jean Ann's from the University of Oklahoma. We were in the same pledge class, and I considered her a dear friend. I was in the house party at her wedding in Beckville, just as she was in mine in Tulsa. As often happens, we lost touch after graduation. For some reason I started thinking about her after all these years and began the process of tracking her down. My efforts culminated in this beautiful Life Tributes page created by her family. And what a beautiful, generous and remarkable life she did live.

I am so saddened that I did not make that special effort to maintain our friendship, a connection, if you will. She was a lovely, gracious, southern lady, and her memory will forever hold a special place in my heart.

I also send my love to Gale who was in the class behind me.

*Jeri Howell Dopler
OU graduating class of 1965*

Jeri Dopler - June 04, 2019 at 11:42 PM