

Close Friend Says Catherine Weirich's Beautiful Smile, Eyes, And Zest For Life Will Live On Forever

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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ALTON - Alton is filled with kind and charitable people but one who will stay at the top would be Catherine Ann Weirich. She lived her entire life in the Alton area and was regarded for her beautiful smile, zest for life, and giving nature. Catherine died recently

and her family and friends now grieve for her, her close friend and fellow 1967 high school graduate Peggy Voumard, said.

Voumard said the Riverbend area feels “a terrible loss,” with Catherine’s death.

Catherine had an interest in cooking, music, gardening, dancing, arts, and crafts. She was devoted to her husband, Greg for more than 50 years in marriage. The two were the dynamic duo behind anything they put their mind to and in recent years were devoted to preparing food for the St. Mary's Catholic Church priests three days a week as one of their main causes.

Rev. Paul Nguyen, OMV, of St. Mary's Catholic Church, said Cathy was the regular house cook for several years. He said he couldn't say thank you enough for what she did for the priests.

"She and her husband, Greg, served us together and it was really special," Rev. Paul said. "With some of the difficulties they faced in their lives they had to rely on faith and the support of church meant a lot to them. This was a chance to serve the church in a hands-on way preparing meals for the priests. They were two of the most faithful front-row Catholics we had at St. Mary's, and awesome witnesses to others. Cathy was definitely a special person."



Cathy helped establish the "All 60's" Facebook page and helped coordinate many of the reunions for Alton High and Marquette friends, which expanded to include East Alton, Roxana, and some of the other area schools. Cathy sparked the group to raise money with every reunion and then give to a charity. Some included funds that helped feed the impoverished, even socks for children, turkeys for some for Thanksgiving, and a sizable donation to the Riverbend Community Center for children's programs. Riverbend Community Center CEO John Hentrich said he and his other board members were very thankful to Cathy and her other '60s Reunion members for the donation she provided in recent years.



Peggy said she was very thankful to Mac's Timeout for the move to host the reunions, now a special time for the Alton and Marquette graduates.

"Cathy went around to businesses to collect donations for the different charities," Voumard said. "It was so special what she did."

Catherine was extremely devoted to her husband, Greg, and the rest of her family, Peggy said.

After high school graduation, Catherine and Peggy both attended the then Monticello College and then became close friends until the end. In her earlier years, Catherine secured a position in the treasurer's office at the City of Alton where Peggy worked, and this brought them even closer.

Peggy Voumard said the last time she saw Catherine was at a lunch at Mac's Timeout to discuss the upcoming reunion. She said she will always remember what she witnessed for the last time that day: "I can still see Catherine's beautiful blue eyes and smile. Her eyes and personality always twinkled to everyone around her."

"Catherine never met a stranger. Once people met her, they felt like they had known her forever."