

Jane Katherine Bruker

Alton | Wednesday, December 15 2010

Jane Katherine (Adams) Bruker passed away on December 15, 2010, her 76th birthday. She was born in East St. Louis, the daughter of Henry B. and Emilie (Jaeger) Adams. Jane is survived by her husband of 56 years, Robert M. Bruker and seven children: Sarah Kirschner (Craig Westerhold) of St. Louis, Susan Bruker (Jeff Brown) of St. Louis, Nancy Bruker of Gallup, New Mexico, John Bruker of El Paso, Texas, Mark Bruker (Alicia Lisowski) of Chicago, Harold Benjamin Bruker (Kyle Henderson) of St. Louis, and James Bruker of Godfrey. In addition, there are seven grandchildren: Henry and Ella Brown, Madeline and Benjamin Kirschner, Rohana and Jonas Bruker, and Jane Marie Estelle Bruker. Her sisters, Emily Virginia Ilch and Elise Ann Sode and a brother, Richard and Joan (Anderson) Adams also survive her.

Jane was an active and pioneering nurse. She completed nurse's training at the Wichita Falls (TX) Hospital School of Nursing, in 1956, and later earned a baccalaureate degree in nursing from SIUE. She also holds master's degrees in both nursing and special education from SIUE. In 1980, the SIUE Alumni Association named her Alumnus of the Year and in 1982 the SIUE School of Nursing presented her their Distinguished Alumna award. She was an active member, as well as an officer, of several professional nursing organizations, including the American and Illinois Nursing Associations.

Jane taught nursing, and was director of the nursing program, at Lewis and Clark Community College from 1981 until 1987 when she accepted the position of director of the nursing program at the University of New Mexico – Gallup Branch. This was the beginning of her work with American Indian students and she worked at UNM-Gallup until her retirement in 2001. While in Gallup, she was honored as a "Friend of the Navajo Nation." At the time of her death, Jane was a consultant to the Navajo Nation, working on the establishment of a nursing program at Navajo Technical College in Crownpoint, NM. The school will enroll its first class in January 2011.

Jane was a great cook (as are her children) and friends and family knew to stop by in the early morning when fresh bread would be coming out of the oven. She was a gardener, a walker and a yogi. In her youth she was a superb horsewoman. Her strength, courage, and wisdom lives on in her children and grandchildren.

The family prefers that flowers not be sent though contributions may be made to the newly established Jane K. Bruker Scholarship in Nursing at Lewis and Clark Community College (5800 Godfrey Road, Godfrey, IL 62035, Attention: Lewis and Clark Foundation Office).

