



Marcia Lou Feters

March 16, 1953 - December 27, 2021

Marcia Lou "Marty" Feters (née Gottschalk), of Excelsior, Minnesota, died at home on Dec. 27 after a 14-month battle with cancer. She was 68.

Marcia Feters spent her earliest years on her family farm in Bourbon, Indiana, where she could often be found riding around on her trained pet pig, Blackie; washing and sanding eggs from the chicken coop, tossing the occasional broken one into the furnace to destroy the evidence; and sitting between her two sisters on their front-porch swing, watching cars go by while snapping peas and shucking corn. Some days, Marty (fatefully nicknamed by a grade-school teacher who was disinclined to have two students named Marcia in the same class) plucked chicken carcasses so her parents could sell them as poultry for \$1 apiece - her eventual college fund.

Though Marty first got acquainted with Jeff Feters at the ripe old age of seven (in their second-grade class, where Marty helped Jeff sound out the text of his Weekly Reader), they waited until fifth grade to begin going steady. The following year, they were voted King and Queen of sixth-grade field day, and in 10th grade, Marty was voted Snow Queen in a landslide after Jeff teamed up with Marty's younger sister to empty their piggy banks into her penny-vote jar.

At the end of their freshman year at Ball State University, Marty said yes to a

marriage proposal from Jeff on a scenic bench on campus. They married the following summer in 1973, when Marty was 20 and Jeff was 19. Jeff turned 20 on their honeymoon.

Throughout her adult life, Marty loved spending time with children. After graduating, she worked as a childhood speech and hearing therapist throughout Indiana, then became a full-time parent after the arrival of her son, Ben, in 1983. Jeff's job with Federated Insurance transferred the family to Nashville, Tennessee, in 1989, and there they adopted their daughter, Ashley, in early 1990.

As a family of four, the Fetters moved several times due to Jeff's job with Federated; Marty and Jeff eventually shared 16 addresses in 13 cities over the course of their 48-year marriage. In every new place she lived, Marty took on new opportunities to help kids and families. She taught P.E. at Ashley's preschool, chaired the games division at Ashley's grade-school carnival, held office with the Parents Association at Ben's high school, and volunteered in its Career Center, to name just a meager few. She even helped plan and chaperone Ashley's eighth-grade dance (much to 14-year-old Ashley's chagrin).

Marty also joined moms' Bible studies and prayer groups in every new community she moved into, and every Sunday, Marty could be found at church, teaching Sunday school and taking notes in her Bible during sermons. Marty's unshakable faith guided everything she did in her 68 years on Earth.

When the Fetters family arrived in Owatonna, Minnesota, for Jeff's promotion to Chief Operating Officer at Federated, Marty joined the weekly Community Supper team at Bethel Church and the local FC chapter of the P.E.O. Sisterhood. She later went on to serve as coordinator of Community Supper and the president of the P.E.O. chapter - a testament to her quiet but

undeniable gift for leadership and the philosophy Marty always called "blooming where you're planted." In 2020, she and Jeff won Owatonna's Spirit of the Community Award, and in 2021, Marty donated her share of the profits from the sale of her family's farm to Owatonna's Community Pathways.

Marty also volunteered frequently with Feed My Starving Children, an organization that packs and distributes healthy food to kids in developing nations. Marty, Jeff, and Ashley were a Big Family with Big Brothers Big Sisters in Owatonna, and alongside Jeff, who became CEO of Federated in 2009, Marty helped host the annual Federated Challenge to benefit the organization starting in 2013. She co-hosted the 2021 event while undergoing chemotherapy, and she received a standing ovation from the event's more than 500 attendees.

With Jeff, her children, and her children's spouses by her side, Marty died at her lakeside home in Excelsior - her "happy place" on Lake Minnetonka, where she hosted annual family reunions and enjoyed countless warm summer days boating, jet-skiing, and playing "dolphin trainer" with her three beloved grandkids. Even as her family members grieve over her absence, her insistence that even the worst days were full of "blessings, blessings, blessings" from God will stay with them.

Marty is preceded in death by her parents, Wilfred George Gottschalk and Violet Irene (Kreighbaum) Gottschalk. She is survived by her husband Jeffrey Feters, her children Benjamin Feters (Stacia) and Ashley Feters Maloy (Brendan), her three grandchildren Cademin, Carlee, and Dylan, and her sisters Patricia Fitzgerald (Eugene) and Janice Bail (Richard).

A celebration of Marty's life will take place on Thursday, Jan. 13 at the Owatonna Country Club from 5-8 p.m. Her funeral will be held Friday, Jan. 14

at Westwood Community Church in Excelsior, at 2 p.m. with a dessert reception to follow.

In lieu of flowers, please consider sending a donation to The Federated Challenge supporting Big Brothers Big Sisters, Feed My Starving Children, or Community Pathways of Steele County.

Previous Events

Church Service

JAN 14. 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM (CT)

Westwood Community Church (Chanhassen Campus)
3121 Westwood Drive
Excelsior, MN 55331