



## Marlene Heger Bixby

May 22, 1936 - July 2, 2022

Bixby, Marlene H. 86, of Bloomington, died on July 2, 2022 at the N.C. Little Hospice in Edina, Minnesota, after a brief illness. Marlene was born in St. Paul on May 22, 1936, daughter of Virginia and William Heger, and grew up in St. Paul alongside older brothers George and Fritz, both of whom preceded her in death. It was in St. Paul that she first met many lifelong friends, including her husband-to-be, Ned Bixby. Marlene first attended St. Paul public schools, and later became the lone proud Protestant in her graduating class at Visitation, kicking off decades-long friendships with her classmates there. Marlene went on to attend both Northwestern University and Macalester College, before her marriage to Ned on August 1, 1957. Marlene's loving partnership with Ned took them from Hanover, New Hampshire to Chicago, Minneapolis, Toronto, Toledo, and ultimately back "home" to Edina, with dozens of annual summer visits to Lake Minnetonka and Love Lake in Wisconsin along the way. Since 2000, Marlene spent much of each year with friends old and new at Casa Bonita, her home near Naples, Florida. With Ned, Marlene became a driving force for several high-impact organizations, most notably World Vision and Partners in Food Solutions. Through World Vision, Marlene supported construction and maintenance of seven schools in central Africa, helping to educate more than 10,000 young Zambians since 2001. Marlene's strong commitment to volunteer work brought her smiling and witty presence to many causes, notably including Abbott-Northwestern Hospital, Children's Home Society and Edina-West High School. Above all, Marlene

was a charming and funny friend, with a zest for music, including her second love, Tony Bennett. She was most content when playing charades or sharing some family lore, and could stop you in your tracks with a clever aside. Marlene's ability to put all around her at ease sustained an extraordinary web of true friendships over many decades. Her nearly 60 year marriage was a standard-setter for others to emulate, until Ned's passing at age 80 in 2016. The dreams, talents, exploits and energy of her beloved grandchildren, and more recently, great-grandchildren, became central to her daily life for the last three decades. Marlene is survived by children Anne, of Edina, Scott (m. Kerry Bixby) of Medford, Oregon, and Tim (m. Heather Myers) of New York City; grandchildren Ben Miller (m. Julia Miller) and Kenzie Dowling (m. Jim Dowling), Scott Bixby (m. Andrew Keenan-Bolger) and William Bixby (m. Alyssa Bixby), Kate Bixby, and Jack Bixby; great-grandchildren Nicole, Andrea, Serena and Liv; and sister-in-law Audrey Bixby, of Tinton Falls, New Jersey. A memorial gathering for family is expected in the fall. In lieu of flowers, the family encourages support for the Children's Home Society ([chlss.org](http://chlss.org)) and Minneapolis Crisis Nursery ([crisisnursery.org](http://crisisnursery.org)).