



Mary Beth Kelley

January 17, 1952 - October 9, 2021

Kelley, Mary B. Loving. Lovely. Loved. Mary, age 69, of Wayzata, passed from a heart attack on October 9, 2021. She was preceded in death by her parents, Melvin and Anna Svela; and brother, Robert. A longtime TV executive producer/director at the U of M, she mentored countless students in the way she did everything else-with competence and kindness. Many of those students went on to excel in journalism and production. She produced numerous award-winning documentaries. She was the executive producer of *Matrix*, a 7-season series hosted by Peter Graves. When she needed a cameraman for a shoot in Mexico, she hired Mark Falstad, who would become her husband of 32 years. They loved to travel and did so extensively. San Francisco was her favorite place, and they went there often. They had been looking forward to many more trips together when she passed unexpectedly. LOVING. Mary loved her life, her family, and her friends. Few are lucky enough to have made the number of lifelong friends that Mary did. She was still close with pals from grade school at St. Joseph's in Hopkins and St. Margaret's High School in St. Louis Park. For more than 36 years, she treasured her Frostbite Falls book group for their reading and discussions, for the great food and wine-but mostly for the chance to gather with an incredible group of accomplished women. She took a year's sabbatical to volunteer answering the crisis hotlines at Chrysalis, a domestic violence center in Minneapolis. LOVELY. Mary battled MS for over 45 years but never let it define her, even while the disease was slowly taking so much away. She

hated it when people called her inspiring, though there's no better word to describe her bravery and determination to live fully and joyfully. Her two service dogs, first Brinks and now Liam, were the lights of her life. She was an active supporter of Can Do Canines, grateful for the gift of independence they'd given her. Mary gave speeches and video presentations for the organization, demonstrating the extraordinary skills a service dog brings to the family. She also loved her cats, Cleo, Binky and Harriet, all of whom were there to greet her at the Bridge-with Brinks in the lead. Mary was simply the nicest person you would ever meet. She was beautiful in all the ways there are to be beautiful: Smart, talented, loyal, generous, compassionate, kind. She had a wicked sense of humor and a smile that lit up the room. Think of any positive adjective, and that was her, too. Don't forget the word "tough" for the many challenges she endured through her MS. With every right to complain, she just didn't. LOVED. Mary leaves behind a shattered husband, Mark Falstad; sisters, Kathleen (Chub) Koehler, Barbara (Arthur) Grachek; and brother, John (Diane) Svela; brother-in-law, Robert (Rita) Falstad; sister-in-law Jan Falstad; many nieces and nephews; and her beloved service dog, Liam. Her memorial service will be Saturday, November 6. Visitation at 1pm, service at 2pm, at Washburn- McReavy Chapel in Edina. Those fully vaccinated are welcome. Those who aren't or can't join us, can watch the live stream at: washburn-mcreavy.com (Click the obituary tab and search Mary's name. Click the photos & video tab on Mary's obituary page to view.) In lieu of flowers, memorials to Pacific Assistance Dogs Society in Vancouver, BC are preferred, pads.ca. Washburn-McReavy.com Edina Chapel 952-920-3996 West 50th St. & Hwy 100

Previous Events

Visitation

NOV 6. 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (CT)

Edina Chapel
5000 West 50th & Highway 100
Edina, MN 55436
(952) 920-3996
info@washburn-mcreavy.com

Chapel Service

NOV 6. 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM (CT)

Edina Chapel
5000 West 50th & Highway 100
Edina, MN 55436
(952) 920-3996
info@washburn-mcreavy.com

Reception

NOV 6. 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM (CT)

Edina Chapel
5000 West 50th & Highway 100
Edina, MN 55436
(952) 920-3996
info@washburn-mcreavy.com

Tribute Wall



“ Washburn-McReavy Funeral Chapels created a Chapel Service for Mary Beth Kelley in memory of Mary Beth Kelley



Washburn-McReavy - October 19, 2021 at 12:58 PM

JH

“ Mary was smart, sweet, and kind. She was skilled and excelled at her job. Our paths first crossed in the early 1980s, when I helped out during a season of producing Matrix. Mary was well organized and expertly steered the ship but was never overbearing about it. She made me feel welcomed and valued, even though I was a lowly graduate student (studying public administration, not television production!).

My heartfelt condolences to Mary's husband and many friends. You were blessed having Mary in your lives, as I was, even if for only a brief while.

Jody Hauer - November 06, 2021 at 11:40 PM

BR

“ Wonderful and touching memorial service for Mary. The stories from her friends and family were quite moving and brought back memories from (Terry and Bruce) of our time in the Twin Cities, and especially of the book club that meant so much to Terry, too. Deepest condolences to Mark and Liam.

Bruce - November 06, 2021 at 04:17 PM

LL

“ I met Mary when I became a volunteer at Can Do Canines. I felt an immediate connection with her and was overjoyed every time I would see her, Mark, and Brinks. She was always ready to give me comfort and love when I needed it. I was at the graduation ceremony when she received Liam and I am thrilled that I am "Aunty" to Liam as I was Brinks. My life will be emptier without my dear, wonderful friend. I loved her with all my heart. I miss you, Mary.
Liz Lucast

Liz Lucast - November 06, 2021 at 04:13 PM

MH

“ Mary was such a beautiful presence. Calm, strong and so smart (and humble). We will miss her!



Marcia Hyatt - November 04, 2021 at 11:32 AM