



## Mary Ann Willis-Sanders

October 6, 1936 - February 28, 2020

Mary Ann Willis-Sanders, 83, of Hamilton, OH and Hilton Head Island, SC died peacefully February 28th at Berkeley Square. She was born to the late Maynard Coe and Mary Efram Allen October 6, 1936 in Elyria, OH. She was preceded in death by her first husband, Richard Reed Willis, MD, October 1989 and by her second husband Mark "Mike" Sanders who also passed on the same day as Mary Ann, February 28th, 2013 and her sister Jane Allen Browne (75), of San Juan Capistrano, CA. She is survived by son Mark A. (Kathy) Willis of Eaton, OH, their children Cameron and Sarah Willis; daughter Susan Willis (Dan) Flahive of Powell, OH, their children Nate and Natalie Flahive; step daughter Jane Sanders (Robert) Minnicks of Hilton Head Island, SC, their children Amara Bennett, Amber Minchey, Autumn Minnicks, Andrew Minnicks, Alex Minnicks, Adam Minnicks (deceased); step son Mark L. (Kathy) Sanders Jr. of Hamilton, OH, their children Tracy A. Sanders Combs, Mark L. Sanders III and step son Thomas A. (Nancy) Sanders of Hamilton, Ohio, their children, Thomas A. "T.J." Sanders Jr., Tyler M. Sanders. Mary Ann graduated from Elyria high school and from Kent State University in 1957 with a degree in education. She taught 3 years in the "Over The Rhine" area in Cincinnati. While raising her children she then directed her energies to volunteer work in the communities she resided. She created and directed the first daily nursery at a Methodist Church in Cincinnati in 1963. When she moved to Hamilton in 1969, in addition to teaching Sunday School for 16 years at the First United Methodist, she directed and wrote the curriculum for the entire church

education program and later served as secretary for their Board of Trustees. Two of her most notable accomplishments included founding the Colleagues of Fort Hamilton Hospital in 1982 (serving the organization as President, President-elect and other capacities for countless years) and working as part of the team to organize DamFest for 10 years. Mary Ann and her team were recognized by the Ohio Hospital Association Annual Convention as the top fundraiser in Ohio at that time. Mary Ann's chosen field was volunteerism. She actively chaired all types of PTA projects, was the past president of her PEO Chapter and chaired a major hospitality committee for the State Convention. She was an alumni advisor to Alpha Phi sorority at Miami University, YWCA Board president and chairman of multiple projects, United Way Board of Trustees and chairman of their public relations committee and solicitor. She was selected as a trainer for the United Way to direct training programs for various volunteer agencies' Boards of Trustees. Mary Ann led the research and creation of Fort Hamilton Hospital's thrift shop: The Bargain Bungalow and volunteered for many years. She was past president of Jr Women's League and former chairman of most all major committees. She was the first chairman of Ham-A-Lot, past president of the Butler Co Medical Aux, chaired Meals-on-Wheels and doubled the number of drivers and recipients. She was a former board member of the Hamilton Community Foundation, Co-Chairman of the Hamilton Bicentennial Grand Celebration Weekend, ambassador for the Chamber of Commerce and the first director of the Leadership Hamilton Class I, created and chaired the Hamilton Visitor Tour Guide program, served several years on the New London Hills Board and was the Oyster Reef Ladies Golf Association past president and chairman. The Rotary Club of Hamilton awarded her the Paul Harris Fellow and she was recognized as a YWCA Butler Co. Woman of Achievement. Mary Ann made the City of Hamilton! Ohio, a much better and more fun place to live! She was a member of Brown's Run Country Club for over 25 years. When not volunteering, Mary Ann always made time for her family, friends and golf. Throughout her life she loved deeply and gave selflessly. For those who have had the privilege to know her,

she will be missed profoundly. A Celebration of Mary Ann's life will be held at 1:00 p.m. Friday, March 20th at the First United Methodist Church, 225 Ludlow Street, Hamilton, OH 45011. Visitation will be from Noon until the time of services at the church. Burial will follow in Greenwood Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Hamilton Community Foundation Mary Ann Willis-Sanders scholarship fund, 319 N. 3rd St., Hamilton, Ohio, 45011. Online condolences are available at [www.weigelfuneralhome.com](http://www.weigelfuneralhome.com)

# Cemetery Details

## Greenwood Cemetery

1602 Greenwood Avenue  
Hamilton, OH 45011  
<http://www.greenwoodcemeteryhamilton.com/>

# Previous Events

## Visitation

MAR 20. 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM (ET)

First United Methodist Church  
Hamilton, OH 45011

## Service

MAR 20. 1:00 PM - 1:45 PM (ET)

First United Methodist Church  
Hamilton, OH 45011

# Tribute Wall

RK

“ I have missed Mary Ann . I am a neighbor in sea pines Hilton Head since 1995 and enjoyed many fun times with her. What a generous talented lady. My thoughts are with her family. Rosemary Kimball.

rosemary kimball - March 06, 2020 at 09:10 AM

GM

“ George M. purchased a sympathy card for the family of Mary Ann Willis-Sanders.



George M. - March 05, 2020 at 07:42 AM

KM

“ I'm so sorry to hear of your loss. What a pretty lady! And I didn't realize she was an Alpha Phi! I am also an Alpha Phi. I'm so happy you spent a lot of time with her. I think that kept her looking and acting so young.

You are in my thoughts and prayers. Again....I'm so sorry. Prayers for your family as you find the new "normal" in your life. 😭



kathleen Mergler - March 04, 2020 at 05:17 PM



“ *Adoring Heart was purchased for the family of Mary Ann Willis-Sanders.*



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March 04, 2020 at 02:30 PM



“ *Prayers for the family, so sorry for your loss. Don & Arthella Pollock*

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**Don & Arthella Pollock** - March 04, 2020 at 08:45 AM