



Marilyn J. Engle

May 25, 2025

Marilyn Engle died peacefully on Sunday May 25, 2025, in Fort Collins, Colorado. She is survived by her husband of 67 years, Richard Engle, daughters Rachel Engle (Walt Scoggins), Rebecca Spears (Kurt), Ruth Lerner (Joel), and Naomi Engle (Jon Pratt), grandchildren Kyla, Kristi, Alyssa, Nick, Briana, Jake, Jonathan, KayLynn, Alec, Wynnona, Rory, and Musetta, great-grandchildren Evan, Jude, Annabelle, Anaiya, Sam, Emilia, Rowan and Amos, nieces Debbie, Kathy, Jeri-Ann and Pam, nephews Ronnie and Doug, and many grand-nephews and nieces. She was preceded in death by her parents Frank and Iola (Bartlett) Lewis, sister Linda (Lewis) Woodard Cornell, brother Jerrell Lewis, and nephew Mike Woodard.

A memorial service will be held on August 3, 2025, at 2:00 pm at Grace United Methodist Church in Sioux City, Iowa.

Marilyn Joy Lewis was born on a farm near Rockport, Missouri in 1934. The family moved to another farm in Decatur County, Iowa when she was three years old, adding a sister and 13 years later a brother. She attended a one-room country schoolhouse through 8th grade where she had a teacher who recognized her quick intellect and accelerated her learning, which was easy to do in a one-room school. She often rode her horse Daisy bareback to school, then let her find her way back to the farm. Daisy was her best friend, and they would find a quiet woodland edging the fields where they could spend a

summer afternoon when Marilyn was not busy tending chicks and ducks or the garden or later learning to drive the tractor.

By the time she started high school, the family had moved to Leon, Iowa where she graduated in 1953. Her intention had been to follow a traditional path for a girl at that time and study home economics in college, but her high-school science teacher saw a spark and her thirst for knowledge and convinced her to major in Chemical Engineering at Iowa State College in Ames. This is where she met fellow engineering student Richard (Dick) Engle who was to become her husband. They were married the day after she graduated in 1958. She enjoyed telling stories about their student years together in Ames – experiencing eating pizza for the first time, working on theater and concert productions, sneaking back into the dorm after curfew, and surviving tough classes. They became life-long Cyclone fans, cheering on the football and basketball teams throughout the years.

Dick and Marilyn made their first home in Davenport, Iowa, where their eldest daughter, Rachel, was born. After moving to Sioux City, Iowa, they had three more daughters, Rebecca, Ruth and Naomi. Marilyn put her scientific mind and creativity to work, opening a Montessori-based pre-school for the neighborhood children for several years. Once her daughters were old enough, she established a 4-H club for them, just as her own mother had done for her. Through the years she led this club, teaching many girls how to bake and sew and keep meticulous record books. Her contributions to 4-H included working at county, state and national levels, and she was honored with the State 4-H Alumni Recognition Award for her more than 25 years of involvement.

Teaching came naturally to Marilyn. When her daughters wanted to learn violin, she found a Suzuki Method teacher and joined the parents' group, learning to play the violin herself in order to be an excellent practice coach for

their music studies. At Grace United Methodist Church, she and Dick taught 7th grade Sunday School for 15 years, coming up with innovative ways of making the lessons memorable and fun for easily distracted teens. For the next 15 years, they led an adult Bible study class, coordinating discussion that incorporated information from historical, archeological and Biblical studies.

The family enjoyed long cross-country road trips every summer, camping along the way. Marilyn enjoyed hikes and nature walks and made numerous backpacking trips with the family – as long as Dick did all the cooking, she was game to carry a pack and sleep in a tent. Later, Marilyn and Dick's travels included international destinations. Many of those were on Prairie Home Companion cruises, in the company of Garrison Keillor and friends. In 2008, Dick and Marilyn brought the whole family on a tour of Turkey, where Dick had been working on archeology projects. We celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in Ankara, dining on delicious local dishes and dancing to traditional Turkish music.

Back at home in Sioux City, Marilyn decided to become a professional volunteer, putting her organizational and teaching skills to use. She spent several years in the early 1980s researching desktop computers which were becoming available and installing them to be used by the church for finance and membership records. She dedicated 10 years to being the church office coordinator and assistant to the minister. Marilyn's church work extended to the state level, being part of committees that advised the Iowa Methodist Conference bishop. She also volunteered with the local Hospice organization, spending time with patients, and recording their thoughts and stories.

When Dick retired, he and Marilyn established the Engle Family Foundation, a philanthropic organization that provides grants to charities. She started a program through email correspondence for her grandchildren, teaching them

financial responsibility and budgeting. She was satisfied to have ideas and lessons to pass on to her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, to be very involved in her “cohesive, harmonious family”. With her computer knowledge, she was a resource for her friends, helping them develop skills and troubleshoot computer issues. When asked by a grandchild about happiness and satisfaction in life she replied, “I live on the premise that life gets continually better, and it has... I’ve learned so much”. Her 50-year membership in PEO expanded her interest in supporting education to young women world-wide.

During the course of Marilyn’s life she overcame many health challenges, surviving five bouts of cancer and a stroke. In 2018, Dick and Marilyn moved to Fort Collins, Colorado, where they could be closer to their daughters. She enjoyed seven years of family togetherness in Colorado before entering the last phase of her life. With the help of Hospice care, she was at home surrounded by her family with her husband, daughters, sons-in-law, grandchildren and great-grandchildren all spending time with her. We shared music, stories and laughter as we took turns gathering around the bedside. She greeted us all by name and with her beautiful smile, telling each “You are so good!” We all felt it was an honor to usher her to the end of her joyful life.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

AUG 3. 2:00 PM.

Grace United Methodist Church
Sioux City, IA

Tribute Wall

TH

“ Rachel and family,

I knew your wonderful mother Marilyn through sleep overs and church. I am sorry to hear of your mother's passing, but find joy in knowing she had such a wonderful life. Her life was full of children, grandchildren, and of course, the love of her life, Dick. Her faith was beyond measure. Hugs to you all.

Teresa Piper Hilts - June 10, 2025 at 01:21 PM

LR

“ Mrs. Engle always made me feel a member of the family when Ruth and I became friends in graduate school at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville. She's now at home in heaven. My condolences to the entire Engle family. Linda Armstrong Rekas

Linda Armstrong Rekas - June 05, 2025 at 10:55 PM

NM

“ Bill and I send our deep sympathy to Dick and his family. We know how much loved Marilyn was by her family and friends. Nancy and Bill Metz

Nancy Metz - June 05, 2025 at 09:14 AM

KH

“ What a beautifully written obituary about a remarkable woman! My condolences to Dick and his family.

Keith Hartje - June 04, 2025 at 10:50 PM

KF

“ *My memories are of how thoughtful she was. How she would always let me know how beautiful I was. Her words would impact me and make me feel appreciated.*

Kristi Engle Folchert - June 04, 2025 at 10:02 PM

PM

“ *Marilyn was such a sweet lady. Sending love and prayers as you all go thru this time of remembering.*
Pam Miller-Smith

Pamela Miller-Smith - June 04, 2025 at 10:12 AM

RW

“ *Our deepest sympathy to Dick and the family. Marilyn was always so kind and polite to those of us who had the pleasure and honor of working for Dick.*
Russ & Jackie White, Des Moines, IA

Russ and Jackie White - June 04, 2025 at 09:27 AM

NE

“ *2 files added to the album Marilyn & Daughters*



Naomi Engle - June 03, 2025 at 10:15 PM

RE

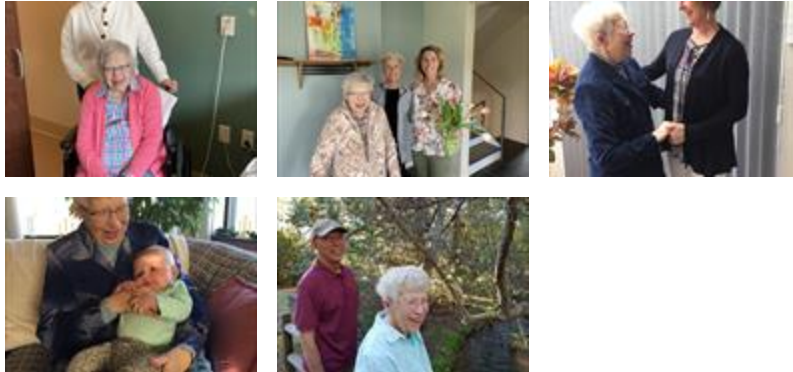
“ 3 files added to the tribute wall



Rachel Engle - June 03, 2025 at 09:22 PM

RE

“ 6 files added to the tribute wall



Rachel Engle - June 03, 2025 at 09:20 PM

RE

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Rachel Engle - June 03, 2025 at 09:08 PM

RE

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Rachel Engle - June 03, 2025 at 08:59 PM

JS

“ *Marilyn was, and is, the most amazing role model of wife, mother, friend, brilliant adviser, and supporter to her family and all who are blessed to have had her in our lives. Yes, she is missed. Yet that true lady lives in each and every one of us. To her wonderful family: thank you for sharing her with us. She is a gift that is within us always.*

Jane Sibley - June 01, 2025 at 09:11 PM

RL

“ 1 file added to the album Marilyn & Grandchildren



Ruth Larner - June 01, 2025 at 09:03 PM

RL

“ 3 files added to the album Marilyn through the years



Ruth Larner - June 01, 2025 at 09:01 PM

RL

“ 3 files added to the album Marilyn & Daughters



Ruth Larner - June 01, 2025 at 08:59 PM

RL

“ 5 files added to the album Marilyn and Dick



Ruth Larner - June 01, 2025 at 08:12 PM

RP

“ Always kind and generous to me.
Bob Peterson

Robert Peterson - June 01, 2025 at 11:14 AM

MB

Always a great friend from high school through our lives.

Marilyn Boswell - June 19, 2025 at 11:23 AM

ND

Marilyn was my cousin. I happened to be going through some family history records that Marilyn had sent me 25 years ago. I searched her name to see if she still lived in Iowa only to find she had passed away less than a month ago. Her mom, Aunt Lola, was my favorite aunt and Marilyn did much to record family history for Aunt Lola and I am thankful for their result. My sympathy to her family.

Nancy Bartlett Detore

Nancy Detore - June 22, 2025 at 06:24 PM