



Mary Elaine Ward

September 21, 1917 - December 9, 2009

With the words "let's go", Mary Elaine Ward quietly went on to join family and friends who went on before. Daughter of John Ward and Elizabeth (Bess) Gillaspey of Green Spring Valley, granddaughter of George and Sarah Gillaspey, Elaine came into this world with a joie de vivre that never dimmed, and a belief that the Old Line State could not be matched. A gentlewoman in the finest tradition, Elaine could nonetheless be found engaged in spirited competition with her male contemporaries, on horseback, in streams with her fly rod or on the trap and skeet range. Elaine was born with a clear sense of purpose to be of service to others, beginning with the Shrine of the Sacred Heart, her parish since the dedication of "new" church in 1917. Together with Monseigneurs Stickney and Taylor she helped form the tradition of exchanges between the children of the Catholic and Jewish communities, so each could learn and share in the traditions of the other. Following that path, Elaine became one of the first graduates of the four year degree program at then Towson State Teachers' College. During her college years, she could also be found, together with her cousin Bruce N. Gillaspey (LTC USA JAG dec.) and his friends at the events of the Dandy 5th, both at the "new" Armory and at the Pikesville barracks. Upon her graduation, Elaine's first teaching assignment was at Fort Howard. With coming of the War, Elaine took a leave of absence and began working at Martin in the quality assurance division in the building of the B-25 Bomber. In her spare time, she became a volunteer nurse, inclusive of working with Father Pat O'Grady of the 29th Division.

Elaine resumed her teaching career ultimately becoming a Principal in the Anne Arundal system. In the 1960's, Elaine was chosen by President Johnson to become a member of the task force which helped create the special education system. Both before and after her retirement, Elaine remained active in the American Cancer Society, the Association of Retarded Citizens, the Boumi Temple, the Coast Guard Yard Auxiliary, and her sisters of Alpha Kappa Delta. Elaine was also asked to become a Member of the Selection Committee for the Naval Academy, where she was part of the Board that selected one of the first female midshipman. Elaine's was a life well lived, that touched many. Elaine is survived by Steele and Kathleen Gillaspey of La Jolla, California, and by the many friends who touched her life over the course of her 92 year ride.

Funeral Arrangements

A Mass will be held on Wednesday, December 16, 2009 at 10:00 a.m. at the Shrine of the Sacred Heart, Mt. Washington.

Memorial Donation

In lieu of flowers, Elaine would appreciate donations being made to the Popcorn Park Zoo, 1 Humane Way, P.O. Box 43, Forked River, N.J. 08731 - the home of her beloved horses, Trudy and Seven.\r\n