



Fern Alice Markwardt

May 25, 1945 - October 24, 2024

Fern Alice Markwardt, 79, of Sheffield, died October 24, 2024 at the Mayo Clinic Hospital, Rochester, Minnesota. Fern's family is hosting a memorial service in remembrance of Fern on Saturday, February 1, 2025, beginning at 11:00 a.m., at Woodley Funeral Home in Hampton, Iowa. Visitation will begin at 10:00 a.m., and lunch will be served following the memorial service. Fern's cremains will be buried at the Pleasant Valley Township Cemetery near Swaledale, Iowa following lunch. Woodley Funeral Home and Crematory of Hampton is helping Fern's family with the memorial service and the burial. Fern was born on May 25, 1945 to Howard William and Margaret Mary (Rother) Markwardt. Raised on her parents' farm west of Sheffield, Fern enjoyed typical, farm-girl activities while growing up, including being a member of the township's girls 4-H club (the Richland Robins), riding the family's Shetland ponies (favorites were Dolly, Beauty, and Babe), and, after turning 16, driving herself and other neighborhood farm children to and from school activities in her red, AMC Rambler convertible. Fern graduated from Sheffield-Chapin High School in 1963. Following her high school graduation, Fern attended and graduated from Hamilton Business School in Mason City, Iowa.

After her business school graduation, Fern began working at Saint Mary's Hospital in Rochester, Minnesota. Her career continued with A.C. Nielsen & Co. in Mason City, Iowa and then with the Internal Revenue Service in Des Moines, Iowa. While with the Internal Revenue Service, Fern became active in

the National Treasury Employees Union, including many trips to Washington, D.C. to meet, together with other union members, with congressional members and their staffs. These meetings, in turn, sparked Fern's interest in politics (and with a partiality for Democrats). Fern enjoyed volunteering in many election campaigns in both Iowa and Nebraska.

Fern also enjoyed visiting extended family throughout the United States, researching with family cousins family genealogy, planning with family cousins annual family reunions that have been held for multiple generations, helping her brother Dean with fall harvesting, and, after returning to live for the past twenty years on the family farm where she was raised, working in the flower beds on the family farm.

And Fern enjoyed traveling the byways of Iowa to discover and enjoy the state's many offerings, including the gems of local restaurants and their specialties. Two shout-outs from Fern in recent years were the Stumble Inn in Bradford, Iowa and its Crispy Pig tenderloin sandwich and the BecMar Diner in Osage, Iowa and its liver and onions on the last Friday of each month (with Fern's always adding to save room for a slice of the diner's sour cream raisin pie).

Fern was preceded in death by her parents and grandparents. Fern is survived by her two brothers, Dean of Sheffield, Iowa and Paul of Edina, Minnesota, her nieces, April Schoning of Thornton, Iowa and Samantha Markwardt of Sheffield, Iowa, her nephew, Matthew Markwardt of St. Louis, Missouri, and many other family members and friends who were dear to her. Fern's family respectfully requests that, if you wish to make a donation in Fern's memory, please donate to the charity of your choice. Fern's charitable interests included food insecurity, childhood literacy, and conservation.

Cemetery Details

Pleasant Valley Township Cemetery

Corner of 130th Street & Jonquil Ave
Swaledale, IA 50477

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB 1. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Hampton - Woodley Funeral Home
306 Central Ave. East
Hampton, IA 50441
(641) 456-3232

Celebration Of Life

FEB 1. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

Hampton - Woodley Funeral Home
306 Central Ave. East
Hampton, IA 50441
(641) 456-3232

Tribute Wall



“ Woodley Funeral Home and Crematory created a Webcast in memory of Fern Alice Markwardt



Woodley Funeral Home and Crematory - February 02, 2025 at 04:04 PM

TG

“ I’m Willie’s youngest daughter and just watched the beautiful ceremony of life for, yes Aunt Bunny. We coined that nickname as small children because as you know she always wore that huge bow in her hair. It flopped like bunny ears. We honestly didn’t know her real name was Fern until late high school or college. She was always Kathy to us and we truly loved her as an aunt. I will cherish the wisdom she imparted, the music she shared and above all the friendship with our mom. She was a beacon to her this past year after losing our father. I know it has been incredibly hard for her to lose both. We are deeply saddened to have not been present at the service. Please accept our apologies and sincere love and appreciation for a remarkable woman.

TJ Williams- Gorman - February 09, 2025 at 09:32 AM



“ 3 files added to the album Photos



Woodley Funeral Home and Crematory - January 24, 2025 at 03:07 PM