



Shari Lee Payne Irwin

November 13, 1965 - November 11, 2011

Shari Lee Payne Irwin, 45, of Washington, Texas, died Friday morning, November 11, 2011, at her home. Shari was born November 13, 1965 in Mitchell, South Dakota to Duane Lee and Lenora Fay Koenen Payne. She always felt a special place in her heart for the Dakota's and the West, especially Wyoming. A graduate of Hampton High School in Hampton, Iowa, she continued her education receiving her Bachelor of Science degree in Education from Iowa State University and a Master of Arts in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Phoenix. She married William "Bill" Irwin at Zion Reformed Church on May 25, 1990. They took a while to find each other, but once they did, they were stuck for life. A resident of Washington for the past 12 years, she was a member of Christ United Methodist Church in College Station and a former member of First Presbyterian Church of Navasota. A former teacher with Navasota ISD, Shari had to retire early due to her battle with cancer. Shari had a student's mind, but a teacher's heart. She was always seeing the wonder around her and sharing it with whoever was open to receive her gift. Shari was a story teller who loved to share stories with her students. She was in her element teaching history and together with her husband, Bill, worked at the Living History Farm at Washington-On-The Brazos State Park. Shari had a deep and abiding faith in God and in human nature. She drank in the energy of the kids she worked with and strove to give each one what they truly needed. Her great frustration was not feeling like she could help each and every one, but she lived for the

spark of inspiration and understanding that she saw in her kids and was so proud of them as they grew and matured. She is proudest of her own children, Katie and James! They have grown to be outstanding young people, who have dealt with Shari's illness with strength, courage and compassion. Shari couldn't have asked any more nor been more proud of them. Her greatest regret is not being able to spend more time with Katie and James, to see them grow and have families of their own. Bill said "Shari always saw our life in songs. At the end what resonated with us was "Let it Be" by the Beatles. Survivors include her husband, William "Bill" Irwin; two children, Kathleen "Katie" and James B. Irwin, all of Washington; her parents, Duane and Lenora Payne of Hampton, IA; a sister, Lynette Lehman of Des Moines, IA along with other relatives and a great number of friends. For those that desire, the family has requested memorials given in Shari's name to Hospice Brazos Valley-Brenham, 302 E. Blue Bell Rd., Brenham, TX 77833, Drums for Christ at www.drumsforchrist.org or The American Cancer Society. Burial will be in the Zion Reformed Church Cemetery.

Tribute Wall



“ *Shari Lee Payne Irwin*

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