



Sonja E. Brill

September 22, 1937 - April 3, 2020

Sonja E. Brill, 82, of Beloit, WI passed away peacefully on Friday April 3, 2020 at Azura Memory Care of Beloit.

Sonja was born September 22, 1937 in Brodhead, WI. She was the second of Orlo and Chloe (Clary) Weston's four daughters. They soon moved to Beloit where she grew up and attended school, and she graduated from Beloit Memorial High School in 1955. It was there in the school band that she met Wes, and the young sweethearts made plans for their future together. Their plan was to marry four years after he graduated, and to have four children (two boys, two girls) each two years apart.

On June 21, 1958 Sonja married Wesley A. Brill at First Methodist Church in Beloit, just as they had planned. During the next several years, Wes's schooling led them to Evanston, IL, Newark, DE, and Palo Alto, CA. Birth of a first daughter in Evanston was followed two years later by twin daughters in Palo Alto and then a fourth daughter in Columbus, OH. So much for the Plan! Sonja and Wes then returned to Beloit to raise their young family and to enjoy being close to the Grandmas and Grandpas.

Sonja wanted to be a secretary, and she excelled in her high school typing and shorthand classes. She graduated from Prospect Hall Secretarial School in Milwaukee while working in a law office there. Work followed for a few years at a law firm in Evanston, but that ended with the first daughter's birth, and she remained a committed at-home Mom until the youngest was off to college. During these years, Sonja also served as the Wedding Hostess at First United Methodist Church for several years.

In 1986 Sonja became secretary to the Principal at Beloit Memorial High School. During her 17 years there she was a bit of an office manager, accountant, and copy machine fixer in addition to her secretarial duties. She very much enjoyed her time there.

Sonja was a member of the River of Life United Methodist Church, and her faith was important to her. Church attendance was required, not optional. She was proud of her

family, and preferred to be in the background offering support rather than being in the limelight. Sonja was very organized and neat, and expected the rest of us to exhibit these same traits. She set for herself a daily schedule of tasks, yet always made time to be a classroom helper, a field trip chaperone, or a school library volunteer.

She enjoyed our family tradition of week-long vacation trips to Rock Lake at Lake Mills, WI, playing euchre with family members, and attending musical concerts and plays. During her years as school secretary, Sonja and Wes travelled with students and teachers on several Spring Break trips to other countries.

Through the years Sonja pursued numerous hobbies or interests from time to time including swimming, sewing, flower arranging, cake decorating, and home canning among others. She liked to cook, and excelled at cookie baking. Sonja was often found cheering on the Purple Knights, the Badgers, and the Packers. After retirement, she and Wes volunteered their help at the Caritas food pantry and at Beloit Meals on Wheels.

Sonja is survived by her husband, Wes of Beloit, WI; daughters: Debbie (Randy) Olson of Appleton, WI, Cindy (Tim) Liebau of Madison, WI, Cherie (Tim) Christensen of Neenah, WI, and Pam (Dan) Millmann of Fitchburg, WI; grandchildren: Kristin (Erik) Christianson, Stephanie (Sam) Kuhn, Eric Olson, Kyle Christensen, Jeff Christensen, Michelle Christensen, Megan Liebau, Jessica Liebau, Brian Liebau, Nate Millmann, and Sarah Millmann; sister, Janet (Don) Weiss of Rockford, IL; sister-in-law, Carolyn Hamilton of Beloit, WI; and many cousins, nieces and nephews.

She was predeceased by her parents; sisters: Donna Bengtson and Jackie Johns; and parents-in-law, Richard and Irene Brill.

Inurnment will be in East Lawn Cemetery. A memorial service will be held at some future date when we again can all gather together. Daley Murphy Wisch & Associates Funeral Home and Crematorium, 2355 Cranston Road, Beloit WI assisted the family with arrangements.

Memorials may be given in her name to the Caritas food pantry, or the River of Life United Methodist Church.

Cemetery

East Lawn Cemetery

2200 Milwaukee Road

Beloit, WI,

Comments



“ Holly Korbol lit a candle in memory of Sonja E. Brill



Holly Korbol - April 20 at 08:10 AM



“ Wes and family: So sorry for your loss. Sonja was a first class lady and a pleasure to be around on Sunday mornings. Obviously a wonderful wife and Mother.

The Hays Family

Laverne E. Hays - April 14 at 09:26 PM



“ Wes and family, My sympathy to you on Sonja's death. It was my privilege to know her as a fellow Methodist before she developed health problems. Wes has been so faithful to visit her daily at Azura. This loss will be a difficult time. I will be praying for all the family. Nadine Stoner

Nadine Stoner - April 13 at 05:07 PM



“ To Wes and Family: My sincere condolences--All of God's Blessings to you in this most difficult time.

I was Principal of Beloit Memorial High School from 1986 to 1997. I had the great fortune of having Sonja Brill serve as my assistant for all those years. She helped me so much in my leadership.

When I first arrived at BMHS I really had some difficult challenges. I was lucky to be able to hire her right away! Her work was impeccable. This was before word processing, she typed everything and transcribed dictaphone tapes, always with quick turnaround times! She was also my gatekeeper and helped keep my calendar in helping me stay organized. There was never a challenge she could not handle as my personal assistant who I confidentially confided in, sometimes venting, or just thinking aloud with her. She was so loyal. She also knew I loved gum drops and always had them on hand. In turn I bought sweet rolls every Friday, and she liked

them (-)!

On Friday nights when we had games she would have her Purple Knight sweater on and attend the games. She was ALL IN when it came to the spirit and culture we wanted to build at BMHS. Everyone at BMHS who knew her, respected her for her professionalism and desire to make our high school the best it could be.

I was so saddened after leaving Beloit Memorial to learn of Sonja's difficult health challenges. This was a sharp and bright woman who had so many good qualities and excelled in all of her interests, which invariably had a profound positive impact on others. Anything she was involved in--she was a GIVER! Something all of us could aspire to be like.

God Bless her wonderful husband Wes who she loved dearly and he was always at her side, especially in these most difficult past years.

God Bless all the Brills, and may your burden be lightened as the days passed knowing Sonja, no longer suffers and leaves this world a better place for having been here!

Dr. James Fitzpatrick
Beloit Memorial Principal 1986-1997.

James Fitzpatrick - April 13 at 05:00 PM



“ Wes and Family,
We are so very sorry for you loss. Sonja was a wonderful person and we both have fond memories of her.
You are all in our thoughts and prayers.

Therese and Jim Fitzpatrick

Therese Ann Fitzpatrick - April 13 at 11:00 AM



“ The staff and the administration at BMHS took comfort in knowing that Sonja worked in the main office. Often times, Sonja was the first person whom we would ask if we had a "How do you do this?" or a "What do they want?" type of question. Most often, she knew the answers to these questions and would cheerfully help us. She will be missed.

Tom Michels - April 11 at 10:51 AM



“ Sonja was the strong, smart, articulate individual who was side by side with each principal and administrator she worked with. She made everyone feel their role and service were important to the mission of BMHS. Her professionalism and personality made it a pleasure to work with her.

Sometime after her retirement as principal of Aldrich Middle school I would often see Sonja (and Wes) walk around our campus.....it made me smile as we would wave to each other.

Sonia will be missed by so many....and many of them will be former students and staff.

David Luebke - April 10 at 07:51 PM



“ so sorry for your loss to Wes and family. Sonja was always smiling when I saw her. A big heart.

Joseph Szokody - April 10 at 04:20 PM



“ Dear Wes and family,

I'm sorry to learn of Sonja's death and will be keeping you in prayer as you wait to celebrate her life at a later time. Waiting can be hard. I remember what a joy it was to have you and Sonja join us in Lake Mills for worship with your kind smiles and supportive presence....long after we had left Beloit. We are sorry for your loss and hold you in our hearts during the next weeks and months ahead.

Revs. Jean and Jeff Nicholas

Jean Nicholas - April 10 at 01:50 PM



“ Dear Wes, Debbie and the entire Brill Family,
We are so sorry for your loss. Keeping you all in our thoughts and prayers.
George and Michele Nauer

Michele Nauer - April 10 at 01:18 PM



“ My condolences to the family. I had the privilege of working with Sonja at the High School for a year or two and enjoyed doing so. Sonja brightened everyone's day with her enthusiasm and love of her job. Sonja shared my love of red licorice, which she was the keeper of.

Betty Foerster

Betty Foerster - April 09 at 09:38 PM



“ My condolences to the family of Sonja Brill. She was always a bright spot in my day at Beloit Memorial High School. Not only was she a great font of knowledge about the school, the district, and the community, but she always was willing to help with a smile. I know she will be dearly missed by all who knew her.

John Gangloff

John Gangloff - April 09 at 11:37 AM



“ Debbie, so sorry to hear about your Mom's passing

Kim Dary Mecca - April 09 at 08:49 AM



“ Sonja was an amazing school secretary who interfaced so effectively with principals, staff, and students. She was a consummate professional who wanted things done right. I loved her smile, her giggle, and great work ethic. I want to commend Wes- the last few years have not been easy but you were there for her every part of the journey. You gave to her in a very special way!

Blessings,

Gene Van Galder

Gene Van Galder - April 08 at 09:51 PM