



## Mary Van Pelt-Neely

May 4, 1933 - March 8, 2008

Mary Elizabeth Van Pelt Neely, 74, died Saturday, March 8, at her home in Springdale after a long illness. Born May 4, 1933, in Creston, Iowa, she was the daughter of Frederick LeRoy Van Pelt and Dorothy Elizabeth Walter Van Pelt. She attended High School in Corning and Creston, Iowa. After graduating from Creston High School in 1951, she enlisted in the United States Air Force, trained at Lackland and McCord Air Force Bases, and was assigned to the USAFB in Wiesbaden, Germany during the Korean Conflict. She was married to fellow serviceman, William Patrick Neely of Siloam Springs, Arkansas from 1953 to 1986. Upon her return to the U.S. in 1955, she enrolled in the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville where, under the Korean GI Bill, she completed an Associate Degree in Secretarial Science in 1957. She later expanded her occupational education at a Northwest Arkansas Realtors School, obtaining an Arkansas Realtor's License in 1977. She established her first home in Siloam Springs and was a member of the Coterie Fortnightly Club, as well as the Primavera Garden Club, from 1958 until relocating with her family to Fayetteville in 1972. In 1973, she entered employment with University of Arkansas Residence Dining Services and was promoted to Assistant Manager, in which capacity she served from 1975 through her retirement in 1997. As a resident of the Fayetteville/Springdale area for 36 years, she dedicated many volunteer hours to community and her home church, University Baptist in Fayetteville. She was a devoted mother, sister, and friend, known for her determination, generosity, unselfish concern

for others, and enthusiasm for travel. Survivors include one daughter, Dot Neely and husband, Jami Lockhart of Fayetteville, Arkansas; two sons, Bill Neely and wife, Connie Willis Neely of Springdale, Arkansas; and Van Neely and wife, Patricia Elsea Neely of Fayetteville, Arkansas; two brothers, Rick Van Pelt of Creston, Iowa; and Richard Van Pelt of Lincoln, Nebraska; one sister, Vicki Van Pelt Stewart of Maryville, Missouri; six grandchildren, Todd O'Dell of Monroe, Washington; Stefanie Ann Gideon of Springdale, Arkansas; Stephanie Cozette and Natalie Faith Neely of Springdale, Arkansas; Amanda Harviston Scopa of Vandenberg AFB, Santa Maria, California; and Andrea Baird of Centerton, Arkansas; and one great grandchild, Brooke Elaine O'Dell of Monroe, Washington. She was preceded in death by her parents and one brother, Tunis Clark Van Pelt. A memorial service in celebration of her life will be held Monday, March 17, 2008, at 2:00 p.m. at University Baptist Church in Fayetteville with Dr. H. D. McCarty officiating. Arrangements for interment at Walnut Grove Cemetery in Corning, Iowa are pending. Contributions to the University Baptist Children's and Outreach Ministries, 333 West Maple, Fayetteville, AR 72701 ([www.ubcfayetteville.org](http://www.ubcfayetteville.org)) and Ventures for Christ, P.O. Box 9474, Fayetteville, AR 72703-0025 ([www.venturesforchrist.com](http://www.venturesforchrist.com)) in lieu of flowers are requested. Plans are underway to establish a Non-Profit Foundation at the University of Arkansas in Mary Van Pelt Neely's name. Further information regarding the Foundation will be made available in forthcoming posts.

# Tribute Wall

JT

“ I am so sorry to hear about your Mom. I know how hard it is. We lost our Mom last August. You all are in my prayers.

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**Jody Tysdal-McLaughlin** - September 19, 2012 at 11:29 AM

TT

“ Bill, Van and Dottie....We am saddened to hear about the passing of your mother. Though we have not seen any of you in many years, I have many memories of us growing up as extended families do. We understand the grief of the passing of a parent as Beverly, our mother passed on last August.

We will keep you in our prayers and know in our hearts that when it is each of our time to come home to Christ we too shall be wondrously greeted.

In Loving Service of Christ,  
Tysdal

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**Troy C. Tysdal** - September 19, 2012 at 11:29 AM

CS

“ Bill, Dottie, and Van.....I am so sorry to hear about the passing of your mother. Although I have not seen any of you in many years, I have so many great memories of us growing up. My two most vivid are a church camp that Van and I attended, and the time we spent with her when my husband and I got married. She always made us feel so welcome and was always so happy and loving. Having lost my father less than a year ago, I understand how hard this is, but now they are both together. I have no doubt she will keep him in line. :) My thoughts and prayers are with you all. Love, Cathy

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**Cathy (Cross) Schnebelen** - September 19, 2012 at 11:29 AM

JW

“ *Mary was a very special and unique person-her smile and attitude signified Mary. Her family is very friendly and loved her very much and all will miss her as well as her friends will. Its hard to believe she has passed but at least she is up there on our side!  
Our thoughts are with Bill, Van, Connie, Trish, Dottie, and Jamie and their kids and her extended family.  
Its a comforting feeling to know she is watching out for all of us*

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**Jon Eric Ellis/Ty Williams** - September 19, 2012 at 11:29 AM

JR

“ *Bill and all Mary`s family. I am very sorry for your loss. Mary was full of kindness, enthusiasm, and concern for all mankind. She will be missed.  
May God bless and comfort you.  
You are in my thoughts and prayers.  
Janice*

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**Janice Ruble-Graham** - September 19, 2012 at 11:29 AM

DR

“ *We are so sorry for your loss. You are in our thoughts and prayers.  
Mary was a wonderful person and will be greatly missed.*

*God Bless*

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**Don Ruble** - September 19, 2012 at 11:29 AM

BM

“ *Dot, Bill, and Van:*

*Your mom was a wonderful lady.*

*The only thing I missed after I moved out of Pomfret Hall was her smile and special way of brightening our day.*

*God bless.*

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**Bryan Mounger** - September 19, 2012 at 11:29 AM

NC

“ *Dottie, Bill and Van - I am so sorry for your loss. Your mother was a very special person who always had a smile for everyone. She was a dear friend back in our college days and a wonderful friend through the years. She will be missed by many. You and your families are in my thoughts and prayers.*

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**Nita B. Cross** - September 19, 2012 at 11:29 AM

LR

“ *Dottie, Bill, and Van - I am so sorry for your loss. Mary was like a second mother growing up. If it wasn't for her and your Dad taking Moma to the hospital I might have been born on the side of the road. LOL I will always remember Mary's smile and chatter. She was always a bright spot wherever she was. Having lost a parent recently, I know what you're going through but you just have to remember, she's in a much better place. My thoughts and prayers are with ya'll and your families at this time.*

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**Linda (Cross) Rogers** - September 19, 2012 at 11:29 AM

JW

“ I worked with Mary for many years at The University of Arkansas. She was an energetic and enthusiastic person, really enjoying helping students and others. Our sympathy on your loss.

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**Jane and Al Waggoner** - September 19, 2012 at 11:29 AM

VW

“ We wish to express our deepest sympathy to the Neely and VanPelt Families at the time of their lost one.

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**verlyne westphal** - September 19, 2012 at 11:29 AM

MH

“ Van,  
I am so sorry in the loss of your mother, if you need anything please let me know. My prayers are with you and your family in this time of need.

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**Maranda Harvey** - September 19, 2012 at 11:29 AM

JR

“ Dottie, we are very sorry to hear about your mother. Our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family.

*Joey & Lisa*

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**Joey & Lisa Rodman** - September 19, 2012 at 11:29 AM

MP

“ *Dot, Bill, and Van,*

*Your mom was very special to our family. We have all kinds of wonderful memories from when you lived here!*

*We are very sorry you have lost her, but feel free, to talk to us or share with us the "special times" we remember.*

*Love,*

*Nancy and Moose*

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**M.L. and Nancy Van Poucke** - September 19, 2012 at 11:29 AM

GM

“ *It has been such a joy to have known Mary. During the time we were together in our Bible Fellowship class I came to love and respect her. As our outreach leader Mary was absolutely tireless in reaching out to those who we had not seen in a while. Mary would often call me during the week to see if I knew of anyone she should call. Not only would she call them but she would make sure they were made to feel welcome when they visited. She was a grand lady. I will miss her so much and I am a better man for having had her in my life.*

*Gary McElhaney*  
*UBC*

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**Gary McElhaney** - September 19, 2012 at 11:29 AM

MB

“ Dotty, Bill, Van - My condolences on the loss of your mother.

*I met your mom when you lived on Woodlawn Drive and Dotty and I were in the 9th grade. Straight away I noticed the spunk and energy she had, which through the years served her well-- especially in various Lucille Ball-type predicaments that would find Mary Neely from time to time!*

*As family and friends gather to celebrate and remember your mother's life I hope you will find comfort in the stories of her energy and humor and resourcefulness and intrepidity that come to the fore. May those stories be a balm on the rawness of losing your parent.*

*The peace of Christ be with you and your family, and with your mom.*

*Love,*

*Melissa*

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**Melissa Upchurch Burnett** - September 19, 2012 at 11:29 AM

JH

“ Sorry for your loss

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**John Harris** - September 19, 2012 at 11:29 AM

BF

“ ALTHOUGH WE DID NOT SEE EACH OTHER OFTEN, WHEN WE DID WE JUST PICKED UP WHERE WE LEFT OFF

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**BETTY J. RUBLE & FAMILY** - September 19, 2012 at 11:29 AM

CZ

“ *My thoughts and prayers are with each of you. Mary was a beautiful woman inside and out. What I remember the most about her was her smile. She had the ability to light up a room. I loved her very much and will miss her. May God hold you close and comfort you with the knowledge that she is safely in His arms.*

*Christine Zini*

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**Christine Zini** - September 19, 2012 at 11:29 AM

SS

“ *Mary raised three wonderful children, one of whom is my best friend, Dot. My thoughts are with Mary's family and I know that she was and is surrounded by angels.*

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**Shelley Faddis Steele** - September 19, 2012 at 11:29 AM

SD

“ *Since I was a young girl, I have loved Mary and enjoyed her zeal and zest for life. When she was first married to my cousin, I spent a lot of time with them and after Dottie was born, even more.*

*We will miss her!*

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**Stan & Judy Guthrie Davis** - September 19, 2012 at 11:29 AM

BM

“ Mary will be remembered in my heart as Dot's fun mother. She was always so beautifully made-up, dressed to the nines and ready to go. It was fun to visit her when Dot and I lived on Watson Street. Being in Mary's house felt like home to me. She was always so inviting. I admired Mary for her faith in God and her desire to let you know that Jesus Christ was her savior. What a gift from God Mary was and how wonderful she can now join Him in heaven. I'll pray for you Dot, and your family, that you make it through this difficult time with faith, hope and love. God Bless, Betsy Magner

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**Betsy Magner** - September 19, 2012 at 11:29 AM

KH

“ Mary was truly a wonderful and inspirational lady. I am glad my Mum and Dad had a chance to meet her at the Fayetteville Reunion. She was a welcoming sight, and always smiling. Now the pain is gone, and she is at home with the Angels watching over all of us. She will be truly missed, but remembered by many. Love Kareen and all the Canadian cousins. We will be thinking of you on Monday, March 17th. God bless.

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**Kareen and Ken Hudson** - September 19, 2012 at 11:29 AM

TC

“ You have our deepest sympathy. Mary was a very special person and loved family very much. She always tried to be to every family get together. My brother, Richard, was always tickled to see her when she came up to Iowa. As I told Dottie on the phone last night, I will never forget when Mary and I were teen-agers, I got to stay with her at times in the summer when she lived on the farm north of Corning and we would make Pork and Bean sandwiches and go up into the tree house and eat them. Always a fun time.

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**Tamara Cannon Cummings** - September 19, 2012 at 11:29 AM

CG

“ *Dot,  
So sorry to hear about your mom. I'll always remember her from our  
Brough days in college. Take care and I'll see you soon.*

*Cindy*

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**Cindy Greene** - September 19, 2012 at 11:29 AM

MW

“ *You are in our thoughts and prayers. Mary was a special lady. She  
added spark to any get-together. We will miss her visits to Iowa very  
much. Thanks for your loving, devoted care. Cousins, Gary and  
Michelle, Aunts June and Virlee*

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**Michelle Walter** - September 19, 2012 at 11:29 AM

AW

“ *I'm so sorry for your loss, Dottie. I will make every effort to be at the  
service. Though I did not know your mother, I knew mine and I loved  
her well, and I have missed her for 25 years. We must honor our  
mothers, pay tribute and remember they stay with us always in  
spirit.*

*My deepest sympathy.*

*Amylou*

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**Amy Wilson** - September 19, 2012 at 11:29 AM

CM

“ Bill, Dottie and Van...and the entire family...grandchildren...etc...

*I am so sorry about the passing of your mother, grandmother...*

*Mary will be missed so much by so many! She was one-of-a-kind here on earth...and is one-of-a-kind in heaven!*

*I know she must be planning many a function and making every detail count...She loved greatly and so we loved her greatly!!!!*

*Whenever you give of yourself to others...think of Mary...*

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**Cynthia McClanahan** - September 19, 2012 at 11:29 AM

KA

“ Trish, Van and Dottie, I am so sorry to learn of your loss. Harry emailed me this morning and sent me a copy of Dottie's email to him. He wanted me to let him know so I will send this information on to him. Your family will be in my prayers.

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**Kay Heiss Adams** - September 19, 2012 at 11:29 AM