



Phyllis Holley Droste

AUG 16, 1925 - JAN 2, 2024



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On January 2, 2024, we said goodbye to Phyllis Holley Droste after 98 remarkable years. Phyl passed peacefully of natural causes, surrounded by her family and under the impeccable care of the staff at Madonna Ptak Morton Plant Rehabilitation Center.

Phyl was born in Dysart, Iowa, to Don and Lenora (Schnell) Holley on August 16, 1925. She attended grade school in Cedar Falls before eventually moving to Waverly, where in 1943 she graduated from Waverly High School.

Known for her quick one-liners and penchant for joke-telling, Phyl would often put her irreverent wit on display in her stories, including the tale of how she met Ed Droste. Phyl had a few dates with Ed during their freshman year, only to find out “he was using me to learn how to dance, then asked out an upperclassman.” Senior year she and Ed performed in the school play, where he again looked her way. She had learned her lesson the first time, and wouldn’t get fooled again.

Upon graduation, Ed got called to war while Phyl did her part back home working the switchboard as a telephone operator. She found herself connecting Ed’s calls home, where she learned of a terrifying gunfire near-miss, and tragically, word that Ed’s mother was succumbing to cancer as he was defending his country at the Battle of the Bulge. Phyl thought “okay, maybe I should write this boy again,” a move that would unite the two for the next 73 years.

Later Phyl would say, “After Ed jilted me, I swore I would make his life miserable, which I’ve been doing ever since!” The joke was on Ed, for sure.

Phyl and Ed married on August 12, 1946, in Waverly’s United Methodist Church, and the two welcomed daughter Linda a year later while Ed was enrolled at Wartburg College. The three moved to Ames when Ed transferred to ISU to join the varsity golf team, then settled into New Hampton upon his graduation and added son Eddie and daughter Sally. The family returned to Waverly in 1954 where the two would reside for the next 60 years.



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Phyl and Ed epitomized the phrase “my better half.” It’s hard to imagine a couple who better complemented one another. As a young Ed pursued competitive golf, Phyl joined him in couples tournaments, including winning the 1981 Iowa State Two-Ball Championship. Later when Ed ran the Waverly Publishing Company, Phyl worked as a proofreader.

Phyl — soon known as “Boom Boom” thanks to her toddler first grandson — loved people and was enthralled by everyone. She was the consummate host of social events, bridge tournaments, ISU tailgate parties and Waverly Country Club gatherings. She could sit for hours and just watch people in public, imagining their stories. And she helped them throughout her life, volunteering at the Bartels Home, Waverly Hospital, St. Paul’s Church, and with the Cub Scouts and Brownies.

In their later years Phyl and Ed made the common senior move to the warmth of Florida, joining their children and continuing their adventures without skipping a beat. She and Big Ed loved connecting with many many friends at Hooters and Pete & Shorty’s restaurants, which their son helped found. She loved the community at their Royal and Regal Palms home in Largo. She would insist on the back pews of Chapel-by-the-Sea so she could watch all the people. And the two never missed their bourbon-and-water happy hours until we lost Ed in 2019.

Phyl’s memory is honored by one son, Edward C. (Marsha) Droste of Clearwater, Florida; two daughters, Linda (Steve) Moon of Ankeny, Iowa and Sally (David) Pitts of Centennial, Colorado; three grandchildren, Ryan, Brian (Robyn) and Kylie (EJ); three great grandchildren, James, Aubrey and Presley; and a vast extended family of nieces, nephews, cousins, step-grandchildren and in-laws. She was preceded in death by her husband Edward V. Droste, her parents, Don and Lenora Holley, sister Jackie Strotman and brother Larry Holley.

A faithful servant of God, Phyl was the life of any room she entered, and loved by so many. To his final breath, what Ed Droste feared worse than death was leaving his girl behind. We celebrate them being rejoined today. Though we on Earth will miss her dearly...

A celebration of life will be held in the spring in Phyllis’ hometown of Waverly, Iowa, after which her remains will join her husband Ed at Harlington Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Chapel-by-the-Sea of Clearwater Beach. (<https://www.chapelbythesea.net/give>).



Tribute Wall

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Dan Wolter posted:

"One of a kind" is the only way I can think of to describe Phyl. She and Ed were wonderful neighbors when I was growing up on Cedar River Drive in Waverly. And I was so glad when they lived close to my parents after both couples moved to the Clearwater area. You always felt like you were the center of her attention when talking to her. And she always loved to talk about the latest Republican politics. Sending all my love to the whole family -- and to Phyl, who has been reunited with Ed once more.

January 12 at 12:09 PM



Susan Usilton shared 2 photos to the **Fun Times** album.



January 7 at 7:49 AM



Todd & Robin Misel shared a photo to the **Fun Times** album.



January 4 at 4:31 PM



Alan Bomstein posted:

Sincerest condolences to our dear friend Ed and the entire family. Phyl was a larger than life presence and her memory will last as a blessing to all who loved her so much. ---Nancy & Alan Bomstein

January 3 at 8:16 PM



Susan Usilton shared 2 photos to the **Fun Times** album.

January 7 at 7:49 AM



Todd & Robin Misel shared a photo to the **Fun Times** album.

January 4 at 4:31 PM



It seems like yesterday that we celebrated St Patricks Day with you and Ed.



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Phyllis by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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