



Fonda Kay Davis

May 8, 1945 - October 5, 2020

She Touched So Many Lives: A Classy Dame Remembered

Fonda Kay Davis, 75, of Cape Girardeau, Missouri passed away Monday, October 5, 2020 at Southeast Missouri Hospital.

She was born May 8, 1945 in Evansville, Indiana to William and Ramonda (Keplinger) Brigance.

She and Michael Davis were married December 5, 1981, in St. Louis, Missouri.

Fonda was a graduate of Lafayette High School in St. Louis County and a 1967 graduate of Southeast Missouri State University with a degree in history and education. She taught middle school in the Ferguson school district and taught for the Department of Defense in the Philippines. While she was in the Philippines, she would travel to various SE Asia countries and would go on Navy ships when space was available. The inside joke was that I, while in the Navy, was never on a ship and was never stationed in a port that had ships while she was able to travel on ships but was never in the navy. What's wrong with this picture? But she had many stories to tell of going about the Philippines meeting indigenous Filipino citizens and found them to be very hospitable and welcoming and wonderful people despite the politics of the day.

She later became a hospital housekeeping manager for ServiceMaster Industries. She was unique in that she was always dressed to the nines but was able to handle a floor buffer/polisher with the best of them, in fact, teaching men how to buff floors while she was in heels. While she was a housekeeping manager at St. Louis University Hospitals, she met me, her future husband. who as an administrator for the psychiatric building, had to discuss with her the condition of the building from time to time. We had many discussions about cleanliness over a cup of tea and a diet coke, as we didn't drink coffee. I thought she was well worth getting to know and so began an affair that lasted 39 years.

We were married on December 5, 1981 at Ellisville United Methodist Church and continued to work at our jobs, joined the Manchester United Methodist Church and there found a place to worship. This is where I first discovered the call to ministry. Fonda was very supportive of me in my ministry. From the very beginning, though we both were involved in other professions when we were married, I felt that I needed to actively pursue ministry. When she learned of this, she not only agreed to be a minister's wife, she actively encouraged me to pursue this dream. And in all the years of ministry, she always thought that it was what needed to happen. When God Calls, we need to answer the call and Fonda then had a new calling, that of being a wife of a minister and an active member of ministry in all the churches that she served. In this vein, as I chose to go to seminary, she became an active leader in organizing the spouses of student pastors at Emory University's Candler School of Theology. She pulled together many of the spouses that were complaining that they felt isolated from the life of the school and from other people that could be supportive of their new callings, that of being the wife of a pastor in ministry. From that came a group that we called the 'diaspora,' (the people that would be dispersed) because we knew that we would all separate and go our own way after graduation three years later. For three years we all met once a month, had a pot luck and enjoyed each other's company and talked about some of the things that can happen to a couple involved in a pastorate. In other words, she was a sort of 'matriarch' of the group, and they looked to her even though Fonda herself was searching for ways to be supportive of me in ministry. She is still remembered well by all who were part of that group, because the group supported each other when it was needed most.

We would move around to different churches to which I was assigned. Fonda would find work wherever he was assigned. She subbed for different school districts as she and I moved around the state of Missouri. She was a teacher for drug and alcohol units in a hospital in St. Louis, an experience that she felt extraordinarily positive about; and she taught English as a Second Language at Perryville schools.

Fonda was a yoga teacher for 15 years, starting Holy Yoga classes at each church to which I was assigned. For her, this was not a job, it was a ministry and she loved every minute of it. She became certified in Holy Yoga by going to school in Arizona. But it wasn't only for those who were normally able to do Yoga. Older people, unable to get on the floor and more to the point, unable to get up off of the floor, were a particular problem. However, she resolved this for people by learning 'chair yoga' for those who couldn't do regular yoga. She taught Holy Yoga until March of 2020, but then along came Covid19 and she stopped. Unfortunately, illness kept her from ever re-starting her classes. She had been told by many who participated in her classes that they benefited and in some cases were changed by doing her Holy Yoga classes. This was a ministry for God in every sense

of the word, and she loved it.

She became an active member in the Philanthropic Educational Organization (PEO) and was interested in helping young women achieve their educational goals.

She was a member of Reagan's Chapel United Methodist Church in Patton, Missouri, and was active in the United Methodist Women, an organization in which she belonged at all of the United Methodist Churches she served. She was a firm believer in God through Jesus Christ and is now sitting in God's heaven doing yoga exercises with all the host of angels.

Creative: A big part of her life was spent in creating beautiful greeting cards. From get well cards, Christmas cards, birthday cards and cards to give away and/or to sell, she used the logo "Imagine." She created a card ministry for her church, sending cards to people to celebrate their birthdays, and she did this in many of the churches that she served alongside me. She knitted and did cross stitch. She has beautiful, framed cross-stitched pictures hanging in her home now. She loved the creative process.

Fun: She had a humorous side that might surprise: She once played a trick on me, who was at the time pastoring two churches—Green City which met at 9 a.m. and Milan UMC that met at 10:30—and these churches had as members the owners of a funeral home in Green City. Fonda arranged to celebrate my 60th birthday, a birthday that of course has to be mourned, by having one of the owners pick me up after the Sunday morning service at Green City United Methodist Church in a hearse and then drive him to Milan UMC, where a group of "mourners" met me at the front door. And yes, I had to get in back of the hearse and lie down. All had a lot of fun that day, making fun of the preacher. And yes, the preacher had fun, too.

She loved to cook. Again, that creative side of her came out. She would try different recipes and was very creative in experimenting with different dishes. She was so much into cooking that she authored her own cookbook, published under the title, "The Delicious Factor." She included some of our favorite recipes. The unique title was given because the more delicious the food was, the more I would eat. And so to help my waistline to keep from expanding, she would make 'less' delicious food, because I would then eat less. The foods included in the cookbook were the most delicious and thus named it The Delicious Factor. Over 200 kitchen shelves have Fonda's cookbook on them.

She loved to travel. When we were recounting some of the fun times in our lives as she lie in her hospital bed, she mentioned our trip to Paris to celebrate for our 25th wedding anniversary as one of her more memorable and fun times. She still remembers that right

after we arrived in Paris, she suffered a severe ankle sprain at the apartment that we rented for the week. It forced me to take a trip, alone, back out to de Gaulle airport to pick up our bags that arrived late. You see, she spoke some French, and I could not speak any. I depended on her to do such things that might require some conversation and she did get to use some of her French speaking skills during our stay in France. She remembered that we went to one very expensive restaurant, La Grenouille, translated The Frog. But it was the walk afterward that really was cool, because we strolled by the Eiffel Tower at night and sat on the lawn with others and watched the tower as it lit up. Another thing that she mentioned was our visit to the American Cemetery at Normandy, which was, for both of us, the most emotional time of the trip. Our trips to Ireland and Scotland, for both of us, was like a return to our roots. She was part Scottish, and so she determined that if she should precede me in death, she wanted me to take her ashes to Glen Coe and throw them to winds in Scotland. There were other remembrances of our travels that we shared with each other but that would require pages.

One of the things that Fonda pushed in our lives when we lived in Springfield, MO, was to become international hosts for foreign students who attended the State University in Springfield. I had some reluctance to do this, but I went with her to the university to talk about the rules of taking in international students. International students were assigned to the hosts and it was our job to help acclimate them to our country, traditions and culture. This turned out to be one of the most satisfying things that Fonda and I ever did. The students that we were assigned were Neelima Katragunta and Maruthi Kari, both from India. They were medical doctors seeking a degree in public health at our university. Fonda would fix them meals while I would work with Maru on woodworking. Without Fonda's insistence, we wouldn't have had such a wonderful experience with these two special people.

Even in my field of making guitars, Fonda was a quick study. I did a stint, four years running, taking my guitars to Silver Dollar City and selling them at a booth that they provided. Of course, we had to stay in the booth from morning til' night, and I had to be relieved for lunch, etc. Fonda would fill in for me so she had to learn the basics of guitar, which I gladly showed her. She wasn't able to play them. She couldn't have told you the difference between a bridge and a fret. But she knew how to sell them. So the story goes that she managed to sell about as many guitars as I did and in one instance, sold the most expensive guitar that I had built. From then on she was able to claim that she was a better sales rep for my guitars than I. And I reluctantly had to agree. I think, though, that she was proud of my work in the making and selling of beautiful instruments, and in some instances, giving away the guitars.

Fonda was always interested in children. That must have been the teacher coming out of

her. When I was assigned to Milan UMC, we got to know a family that resided next to the parsonage, and this unique family had three children that we came to know over the time we were assigned to that church. There were two others but they were no longer living at home. The three kids were regular visitors, and Fonda would teach them about cooking, as well as helping them with homework and so on. They were a fun family. She would also participate in water balloon fights with the kids. Fonda would get them to side with her, and they would gang up on me. Yes, I got a soak'n. But later after we moved, the kids would visit with us, even after we moved to Cape Girardeau and Fonda loved it. She loved having kids in the house and all the chatter and activity that was involved. Fonda just enjoyed life, and it showed in the way she treated these kids.

She was political. Fonda had an acute sense of fairness and decency. She knew that society had major problems on several fronts including racial issues, gender related issues, and a host of other issues that needed to be addressed by our nation and our states. Politics is, of course, the only way that the nation can negotiate solutions to the problems, and she didn't just want to be a bystander. She involved herself in local politics and as a progressive, worked with the local Democratic Party. She contributed her time and money so that the causes that she believed in would get a voice. We both worked side by side with others on building our local party, understanding that to ignore politics will bring with it a terrible price. She believed in what is known as Fair trade, equal pay for women, voting rights, LGTB rights and other progressive ideas. I was proud of her and her passion to help others who couldn't help themselves and for the rights of all people in our democracy.

She dearly loved her cats, her grandchildren, her church and hopefully, her husband. She enjoyed working for the library, for Meals on Wheels, and for several years, working at the District Office of the UMC in Cape Girardeau. She will be missed.

With Love, your husband for 39 years, Michael

Survivors include her husband, Michael Davis of Cape Girardeau; daughter, Shannon (Kevin) Huckabee of Marysville, WA; two grandchildren, Jesse and Mikayla Huckabee. She was preceded in death by her parents.

A celebration of life memorial service will be Saturday, October 10, 2020 at 1:00 p.m. at Ford and Sons Mt. Auburn Chapel with Rev. Scott Moon officiating.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made out to Reagan's Chapel United Methodist Church, or the scholarship fund of the Philanthropic Educational Organization (PEO).

Events

OCT **Memorial Service** **01:00PM**

10

Ford & Sons Mt. Auburn Chapel

1001 N. Mt. Auburn Rd., Cape Girardeau, MO, US, 63701

Comments



“ i started yoga with fonda at centenary methodist church in cape girardeau. we discussed national problems and she invited me to a democratic meeting at her and david's house where i began meeting people active locally in the democratic party. i am still working in the democratic local group and continue yoga at the jackson civic center. i am proud of both. thank you fonda (and michael) for the changes you made in my life! -john boyd.

john boyd - March 17 at 02:56 PM



“ We were next door neighbors, and always had something going, She was very involved with my children, we are honored to have them mentioned in the obituary, we often shared meals, grew our gardens together took long walks and enjoyed a strong friendship. It saddens me to hear of her passing. I know she is now in the arms of our Lord, happy and healed. I regret not having seen her more recently. She will always be in my heart. I could not have asked for any better a friend than Fonda was to me. I do regret that COVID exposure has prevented my travel to her funeral today.

Melissa Stover - October 10, 2020 at 01:57 PM



“ Fonda has been an open, loving, person caring about justice and working for that end in our world. We will all miss her. Blessings, healing, and safety to all the family, especially to Michael.
Denis and Jan Rigdon

Denis Rigdon - October 10, 2020 at 11:42 AM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Fonda Kay Davis.



October 09, 2020 at 01:28 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Fonda Kay Davis.



October 09, 2020 at 12:06 PM



“ I am very sorry to hear of Fonda's passing. I met her when we worked at the polls on election days. She was friendly, kind, and fair to others. When I saw her at the last election when she came in to vote, I had no idea that the Lord would be calling his angel home so soon. I will never forget Fonda. It is a blessing to have met here. I pray the Lord will continue to bless and provide comfort in the wonderful memories that you have shared.

Sybil Walley - October 09, 2020 at 10:51 AM



“ Pink Potpourri Bouquet was purchased for the family of Fonda Kay Davis.



October 08, 2020 at 11:10 PM



“ Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Fonda Kay Davis.



October 08, 2020 at 09:28 AM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Fonda Kay Davis.



October 08, 2020 at 12:10 AM



“ Fonda was my friend who was always positive, loyal, energetic, upbeat and fun. She was a person of strong faith. We shared many conversations and experiences together as pastors' wives including spiritual retreats, lunches and couple's dinners in each other's homes. Fonda was a great organizer and a creative chef. I also enjoyed her yoga class in Northeast Missouri. Fonda was a blessing who will be greatly missed.



Marti Koch - October 07, 2020 at 11:46 PM



“ Fonda will be missed by all of her knitting/spinning friends. Keeping you all in my thoughts and prayers

Joyce Macke - October 07, 2020 at 11:19 AM



“ Fonda's positive attitude and determination was an inspiration to all who knew her. Her hard work and focus will be sadly missed.

John Heisserer - October 07, 2020 at 09:22 AM



“ I deeply miss Fonda and our Holy Yoga class. I enjoyed being in her class at Centenary United Methodists Church for 5 years.

Carolyn Lee - October 06, 2020 at 04:44 PM



“ Fonda was a caring woman and her presence in our lives will be sorely missed.

Cindy Jenks - October 08, 2020 at 10:50 AM



“ I'm sure that all that knew Fonda are better people for her having touched their lives. She's dancing with the angels now! Michael and family, you are in our prayers. Dee and Larry

Dee Garrison - October 08, 2020 at 10:05 PM



“ I am so thankful to have called Fonda a friend. She was a light in the darkness. We bonded over being pastors wives and so much more. She would always seek me out at annual conference and district events.
I appreciated her positive and upbeat wisdom.

JoEllen Dowler - October 05, 2020 at 10:43 PM