



WINTER HAVEN - Mary Carolyn Whitlock Puckett, 75, of Winter Haven, Florida died on September 29, 2011 of Heart Failure.

A native Floridian, Mary Carolyn was born in Lake City on November 9, 1935 to Carolyn and Gene Whitlock. Mary Carolyn attended Taylor County High School in Perry. This is where she first met John Puckett, who later became her husband of 52 years. She graduated with majors in chemistry and biology from the University of Florida, where she was a member of the synchronized swimming team. This began her lifelong love of UF sports. In addition to all things Gator, she was an enthusiastic supporter of Duke basketball and professional tennis of all

sorts.

After college, Mary Carolyn worked as an elementary school educator and put her husband through medical school as a chemistry technician at Touro Infirmary in New Orleans. Mary Carolyn later combined the skills she learned in college for precise measurement and experimentation with her well-documented passion for cooking. This led her into co-ownership of LazyGourmet, a local gourmet food company. She has an extensive cookbook collection and was frequently called upon by friends to help with recipes and cooking advice for countless brunches and dinner parties.

Mary Carolyn loved living in Winter Haven, where she resided for over 40 years. She believed that the true measure of success in life lies in what you give of yourself to your community and to others. Nowhere was this more evident than in the active community service role she played throughout her life. Mary Carolyn was a charter member of The Junior League of Greater Winter Haven and served as president in 1984-85. An active member of The Garden Club of Winter Haven since 1972, she served as its president from 1979-1981. A strong believer in the important function a library plays to public literacy and education, Mary Carolyn was a board member and active volunteer with the Friends of the Winter Haven Library. Mary Carolyn was a past president of the Valhalla Homeowners Association and was a member and volunteer at St. Paul's Episcopal Church. In addition, she was a loyal supporter of the arts, especially the Ridge Art Association and Theatre Winter Haven. Her active community involvement instilled in her the kindness, compassion and unselfishness for which she is widely known.

More than anything else, Mary Carolyn took obvious joy in spending time with her friends and family, particularly her four grandchildren. Her fondest memories were of vacations at Little Gasparilla Island and she took great pleasure in reviewing the years of logbooks that chronicled everyone's adventures there.

Mary Carolyn is survived by her husband, John Puckett Jr. MD; her daughters Amye Bailey of Tampa and Allyson Puckett of Tallahassee; her son and daughter in law J and Beth Puckett of Dallas; her grandchildren John, Sarah, Virginia, and Daniel; and brother Buddy Whitlock of Tallahassee. Her parents and her brother Jimmy Whitlock predecease her.

Memorial Services will be held at 11 :00 am on Monday, October 3, 2011 at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Winter Haven, Florida. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Friends of the Winter Haven Library, 323 Avenue A NW, Winter Haven, Florida 33881. Condolences may be sent at www.oakridgefuneralcare.com

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