



Jean Ann Knighten

Born in New York, NY on Dec. 20, 1946
Departed on Mar. 16, 2014 and resided in Fairfax, VA.

Visitation: [Saturday, Mar. 29, 2014](#)

Service: [Saturday, Mar. 29, 2014](#)

Cemetery: [Arlington National Cemetery](#)

Of Fairfax, Virginia, died at her home on Sunday, March 16, 2014. Born December 20, 1946, in Jamaica, Queens, New York, the daughter of the late Walter and Cecelia Orkwis, Jean was the first in her family to graduate from college with a Mathematics degree from University of Dayton. She began her federal government career with the U.S. Air Force Foreign Technology Division in 1968, a time when few women held positions in the Defense field. While working full-time and raising two children, Jean earned her master's degree from the Central Michigan University.

Her Department of Defense career took her from Ohio to Virginia to Colorado and, ultimately, back to Virginia. During her 30 years of federal service, Jean served in critical intelligence analysis and policy leadership positions within the U.S. Air Force FTD and Defense Intelligence Agency. After retiring from DoD, she worked for four additional years at the Battelle Institute before fully retiring in 2012. Jean had a love of travel and learning about other cultures. Although she visited many parts of the world over the years, one of her favorite places was the southwest United States. While living in Colorado, Jean and Larry fell in love with the broad vistas, culture, history, and arts of the southwest and Native American people. After returning to Virginia, they traveled back to the area often and maintained strong friendships with many people they met during their visits.

Jean will be remembered by all who were fortunate enough to have their lives touched by her. Throughout her career, she served as a role model to many and always exhibited the highest level of integrity and professionalism. She lived with cancer for more than 15 years but never let it define her. She battled her disease with both grit and grace and was a hero, mentor, and friend to many women who faced the same fight. Her intelligence, elegance, fortitude, and generous spirit will be missed by all of us whom she leaves behind.

Jean is survived by her loving husband of 26 years, Larry Knighten. Devoted mother of Brian Majewski (Julia Spencer) and Amy Escolpio (Jayson); adoring grandmother of Jaykob and Elizabeth; three step-children, Chip Knighten (Tanya), Aprill Garretson (Mike) and Heather Martelle (Craig Clark) and numerous step-grandchildren.

Relatives and friends are invited to Jean's life celebration at St. Mark Catholic Church, 9970 Vale Rd, Vienna, VA. on Saturday, March 29 from 10:30 AM till time of Mass of Christian Burial at 11:30 AM. Interment will be held at Arlington National Cemetery at a later date. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Life with Cancer Center, 8411 Pennell Street, Fairfax, VA 22031, 703-698-3526.