Alice May Rolston

May 27, 1926 - March 23, 2020

On May 27, 1926 Pittsburg, KS welcomed its newest citizen, Alice May (Musgrave) Rolston. If she had been born five days later, she would have been Alice June.

Her dad Mark owned a manufacturing business and patented a mechanical brake tester for cars. In need of better access to shipping, he moved the business and the family, her mother Vanita and two older brothers, Orly and Audley, to Springfield, OH when Alice was five.

There she grew up on a farm on Byrd Rd. playing with her dog Sport, and riding Babe, her horse. Sport instinctively knew to look both ways before crossing the road, and Babe was a prankster, taking unsuspecting guest riders for a shortcut under the clothesline.

The dipping driveway up to the farmhouse ran alongside the front pasture, where the sheep they raised were corralled by a single wire electric fence. One day a lost delivery driver came up the drive, parking at the top of the hill, to ask for some help. Alice answered the door, and while they were talking, his truck began rolling backwards down the dipping driveway. From previous experience, she knew that the truck would roll to a stop once it got to the bottom of the driveway. Before she could get out the words out, he took off running across the sheep pasture after the runaway truck. He apparently

didn’t see the single wire electric fence, because he wound up face down in the sheep pasture. The truck came safely to rest in the dip of the driveway.

Her youngest brother, Audley, mounted a small gas motor on a bicycle creating what today would be called a moped. In February 1939 he took it for a spin around the block. They lived in the country, so ‘around the block’ was several miles. Part way around he ran out of gas. Frustrated, he walked the bike home. Days later, in a pre-antibiotic world, he contracted and succumbed to pneumonia at the age of 17.

Alice graduated from Springfield High School with her future husband, Carl Rolston, whom she didn’t really know at the time, and comedian Jonathan Winters.

During World War II, Musgrave Manufacturing shifted to making aircraft parts. Alice worked in the office doing bookkeeping, but with the men off to war, she was pressed into service in the shop. Using a drill press to make washers to very exacting standards, she was a Rosie-the-washer-maker.

She graduated from Wittenberg University with a degree in home economics. While there, her best friend, and Delta Zeta sorority sister, invited Alice on a double date with her boyfriend and his best friend, Carl. He’d just returned from his service in the Army and Alice was struck with his gentle smile, fun loving nature and thick head of black hair.

She said, ‘Yes’. And on June 11, 1948, Alice married Carl Rolston. They began their life together in a tiny second floor apartment on Bechtle Ave. A year later they welcomed their first child, Diana, to the family. And they eventually had two sons - Dwight, who passed away at birth, and Brian.

With a passion for travel and camping, Alice and Carl took their family on

numerous adventures. Across the country or around the state, many sites were seen, experiences had, marshmallows burned, and memories made. The adventures continued as proud grandparents to five, bringing them along for the fun.

Alice was a devoted mother. She was a troop mother, den mother, room mother, marching band parent, PTA member, and church youth group leader. She and Carl spent countless hours supporting and attending their children's activities. Parades, plays, science fairs, games, concerts, school carnivals, troop meetings, campouts, cookie sales, fundraisers, graduations, and weddings – they were there for their children and grandchildren. And they were there for the disappointments, the heartbreaks, and difficulties too.

As a wedding present, Alice's parents gave her a state-of-the-art Singer sewing machine. Over the years, yards and yards of fabric passed through it. Curtains for their tiny apartment was the first project. More curtains, shirts, coats, suits, dresses, square dance clothes, costumes, burping cloths, pillows, cushions and more flowed from her hands. Enduring gifts and memories for her family. If not for the coronavirus pandemic, her Singer sewing machine would have been on display at her memorial service, with its lid open and light on.

Knitting was also a favorite pastime. Hats, mittens, scarves, and blankets – she made sure the family stayed warm and comfy.

She enjoyed help from the kids, and grandkids, in the kitchen making cookies, cakes, candy and the occasional pie. Homemade ice cream was a staple of family summertime events. She made cocoa from scratch almost every morning, and on occasion, would make hot fudge from scratch as a Sunday evening treat.

Alice was a practical joker. She and Carl purchased a wall clock. It was actually more of an in-the-wall clock. It required a hole, nearly the size of the clock face, to place the clockworks in, so the clock face would be flush with the surface of the wall. The numbers would then be placed on the wall around the clockworks. It was a 60s thing. He hadn't gotten around to making the hole, so she cut a jagged hole-like shape from a piece of construction paper and pasted it to the wall on the spot where it was to be mounted. At the time, he didn't quite see the humor in it, but the proper hole was made, and the clock mounted shortly after.

In 1972, Carl's career with the Ohio Bell Telephone System took the family to Worthington, OH.

Alice was a lifelong Methodist, and very involved in the Central United Methodist church in Springfield, and Worthington United Methodist in Worthington as an office volunteer, Sunday school teacher, youth group leader, bell choir mom and a member the United Methodist Women circle. She was also a member of the Riverside Methodist Hospital sewing guild, using her talents to make surgical masks, gowns, drapes, burping cloths and stuffed animals for children in treatment. She also volunteered at the hospital helping patients and their loved ones by delivering mail, flowers and cheer.

After raising her family, Alice returned to the work outside of the home, eventually retiring after 20+ years of preparing taxes, with her co-worker Carl, at H&R Block. After retirement, she continued to study the latest tax codes and do family members' taxes until dementia made that too difficult.

In the off season, Alice and Carl enjoyed traveling, taking trips abroad and around the U.S. and still camping in their RV. Gatlinburg, TN, Branson, MO and Berlin, OH were among their favorite destinations. And sometimes, just to

go camping, they'd head to Alum Creek, their local state park, to fish, enjoy the outdoors, and roast hot dogs and marshmallows over the fire. They especially enjoyed it when the kids and grandkids could join them.

Eventually camping became too much work for their aging bodies, but they still traveled by car and by plane when possible.

In his later years, Carl had a series of health issues. Alice was there, as always, by his side in the hospitals, rehabs, nursing homes and as his primary care giver when he was able to return home. She was with him when he passed in October 2011.

After Carl's passing, Alice's family began noticing some memory issues. Eventually she was diagnosed dementia. Her daughter Diana passed away unexpectedly in 2015. While Alice was able to mourn the loss, thankfully, the dementia soon erased the unimaginable memory of losing a child.

Even with dementia, she always had a ready smile for her family, could laugh at a joke, and especially enjoyed it when visitors brought her ice cream and candy. She almost made it to her 94th birthday. As far as anyone knows, that's a family record.

Through triumph and tragedy, love and laughter, three things remained true. Her sweet tooth. Her sense of humor. And her unwavering devotion to her family.

On March 23, 2020 she passed away peacefully, holding her granddaughter's hand.

Alice is preceded in death by her parents, Mark and Vanita Musgrave, husband Carl, son Dwight, daughter Diana (Snyder), numerous aunts, uncles,

cousins, and most of her friends.

She is survived by her son Brian Rolston (Angela), grandchildren Dale Roach (Kris), Donna Lewis, Dwight Snyder, Joey Rolston, Jonathon Rolston, seven great grandchildren, and nieces and nephews who will cherish her memory forever.

A Celebration of Life will be held when all are safe from the Coronavirus.

She will be laid to rest with Carl, son Dwight and her parents at Glen Haven Memorial Park, 8200 W National Rd, New Carlisle, OH 45344.

Donations may be made in Alice’s memory to Worthington United Methodist Church, 600 High St, Worthington, OH 43085.

Cemetery Details

Glen Haven Memorial Park

8200 W. National Rd
New Carlisle, OH 45344

Tribute Wall

Alice May Rolston

January 28, 2023 at 10:24 AM

MH

Alice was a dear friend and I loved her and Carl so much. We worked together at H&R Block for years and would go out for lunch on birthdays with our friend Margie. We would always have a Christmas luncheon to celebrate our friendship. I lost track of Alice after Carl passed but she is always in my heart. May God bless and watch over the family.

Mary Harrison

Mary Harrison - May 13, 2020 at 10:05 AM

GM

Alice was a very special woman . She always had a smile on her face . I will miss seeing Alice at the laurels .

Gerry McLeod - March 26, 2020 at 10:52 AM