



## Mary Margaret Haley Leavitt "The Flag Lady"

January 23, 1936 - December 4, 2023

Mary Margaret Haley Leavitt, affectionately known as "The Flag Lady" passed peacefully in her sleep surrounded by her loving family in the early morning of December 4,

2023. Born to Walter Haley and Irene Showers on January 23, 1936. At thirteen she lost her

father to cancer, deeply impacting the woman she became. Asked by her mother to drop out of

school to help with finances, Mary worked three part time jobs while finishing high school as a

North High Polar Bear. She was a most resilient, passionate, hard-working and loyal woman.

It was at North High school that she met the love of her life. She married her high

school sweetheart, Thomas Benson Leavitt in 1956. She often said he was the wind under her

wings. Mary is survived by her three children, Lori Leavitt Watson (Michael), Andrew "Andy"

Benson Leavitt (Brenda) and Charles "Charlie" Haley Leavitt (Janet); grandchildren. Jason

(Heather) Ogle, Grant (Colleen) Watson, Thomas (Kate) Watson, Tyler (Rachel) Leavitt, Harrison

(Linnie) Watson, Samuel Leavitt and Haley Leavitt; Seven wonderful great

grandchildren and many cousins, nieces and nephews, grandnieces and grandnephews. Finally, brother-in-law Mac Benson Leavitt and sister-in-law Barbara Leavitt Franklin. She was preceded in death by her parents, brother Robert Stevenson, & sisters Rosalyn Archer & Sharon Norman.

Trained as a legal secretary, Mary worked for Arthur I. Vorys of The Vorys Firm for a number of years before moving to Illinois. Driven by her love of country she began selling the American flag out of the trunk of her car in 1979. She was dubbed "The Flag Lady" by the Chicago Sun Times. In 1980 she moved back to Columbus and began her business as "The Flag Lady. Mary was actively involved in the Clintonville community, loved The Ohio State Buckeyes, ran for Columbus City Council and was a founding member of the National Independent Flag Dealers Association (NIFDA), was a long time member of the National Federation of Independent Businesses (NFIB), as well as a Daughter of the American Revolution (DAR). She led the pledge of allegiance for two presidential candidates at their nominating conventions. She was also a member of Grace Polaris church. Mary loved God, her family, her country and friends with all that she was. There will be calling hours for those who wish to offer their condolences on Thursday December 7, 2023 from 4p - 8p at Rutherford Corbin Funeral Home 515 High Street Worthington, Ohio. A service will follow at Rutherford Corbin Funeral Home on December 8,

2023 at 10am followed by a graveside ceremony for family and close family friends at Greenlawn Cemetery where her body will be laid to rest. In lieu of flowers, please consider donating to Project Shiloh: <https://flagladyusa.com/pages/project-shiloh> Buckeye Cruise for Cancer: [www.buckeyecruise.com/fundaneed/](http://www.buckeyecruise.com/fundaneed/) Honor Flight Columbus: <https://www.honorflightcmh.org/>. Envelopes will be available at the funeral home. Rutherford Corbin Funeral Home Worthington, Ohio is honored to care for the Leavitt family.

# Cemetery Details

## Green Lawn Cemetery

1000 Greenlawn Ave.  
Columbus, OH 43223

# Previous Events

## Visitation

DEC 7. 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Rutherford Corbin Funeral Home  
515 High Street  
Worthington, OH 43085

## Funeral Service

DEC 8. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Rutherford Corbin Funeral Home  
515 High Street  
Worthington, OH 43085

# Tribute Wall

JL

“ Bill & Joanne Legg send sympathy to the Leavitt Family on the passing of Mary. To Lorie, Andy, and Charlie we want you to know that we treasure our memories of the Kansas City Days. Mary was an amazing person. We loved her humor, zest for politics, business, and life. Even back in the 1960's we knew she would be very successful. A Great American for sure!

*family o*

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**Joanne Legg** - December 11, 2023 at 01:05 PM

SP

“ I am so very sorry Laurie and family. She was a great lady.

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**Sue Pohler** - December 10, 2023 at 11:28 AM

TO

“ Condolences to Lori and family. I also enjoyed being around Mary and Tom. Mary was vibrant, patriotic and will be missed.  
Tonya

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**Tonya** - December 07, 2023 at 06:41 PM

DU

“ Condolences to Lori, Andy and the entire Family. Mary's good people.

Duffy - December 07, 2023 at 04:39 PM

MV

“ Mary and I worked together in the Grace Polaris' coffee ministry for a number of years. She knew EVERYBODY and called them by name. It was a positively energized environment whenever she served. All of us who served coffee and bagels with her on Sunday mornings will dearly miss her.

~ Mark Vaas

Mark Vaas - December 07, 2023 at 03:38 PM



“ Sacred Duty Spray was purchased for the family of Mary Margaret Haley Leavitt "The Flag Lady".



December 07, 2023 at 02:03 PM

GS

“ Greg Ish Jerry Kevin Mark Rasheeda Susan planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mary Margaret Haley Leavitt "The Flag Lady".

Greg Ish Jerry Kevin Mark Rasheeda Susan - December 07, 2023 at 02:03 PM

KP

“ Mary was a beautiful woman, inside and out. I was privileged to be a friend through the Flag Lady's Store and we had many enjoyable visits. She was a true faithful American, and God fearing lady. Rest in peace Mary, in God's loving arms.

*Kathy Puccetti*

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**Kathy Puccetti** - December 07, 2023 at 01:31 PM

CS

“ Lori, Andy, and Charlie' Very sorry to read of Mary's passing. Fond memories of the "early" Clintonville times on Fallis Road with Mary and Tom. A great lady. All best wishes. Craig Stewart

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**craig Stewart** - December 07, 2023 at 12:34 PM

ML

“ I have many fond memories of Mary and her husband, Tom. Most of all I remember how she would always make me laugh! My deepest condolences to her family.

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**Maureen Latanick** - December 07, 2023 at 12:05 PM

SM

“ Sherry Ellwood Mahaffey purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of Mary Margaret Haley Leavitt "The Flag Lady".



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**Sherry Ellwood Mahaffey** - December 07, 2023 at 04:16 AM

SM

“ Sherry Ellwood Mahaffey planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mary Margaret Haley Leavitt "The Flag Lady".

Sherry Ellwood Mahaffey - December 07, 2023 at 04:16 AM

JA

“ As a young and lifelong clintonvillian, I have shopped and supported this wonderful lady and her business in my 72 years! ☐

jay - December 06, 2023 at 08:35 PM

NG

“ Mary and I were friends at North High School, class of 1954. We had a lot of fun and Mary was always enjoyable to be around. She had many friends and was always very happy. She will be missed by everyone. ! Nancy Ries Graf

Nancy Ries Graf - December 06, 2023 at 08:09 PM



“ I remember meeting her in 1999, when I was selling ad space for my high school's yearbook. She was very kind and helpful (and bought a half page ad 😊 ). Her store is one I have frequented over the years, and she will be greatly missed in our community.

Alex Sawyers - December 06, 2023 at 02:30 PM

DC

“ My heart is broken. I've been blessed with knowing Mary "Flag Lady", her late husband Tom, and her kids for over 33 years. Her smile and laugh will never be forgotten. She was an inspiration to everyone she knew. Her love for God & Country and the Buckeyes was contagious, to say the least. I'm so grateful for all she did for me during my years as Brutus Buckeye from 1990-1992 and beyond, and the memories of our times together that I will cherish forever. I'm also grateful that my son was able share a similar experience with her during his time as Brutus Buckeye in 2022. My favorite memories were flying the custom flags she made for every home OSU football game just for Brutus to have on the field out in front of her store on Friday afternoons, her being my guest "Date" for one of the OSU Cheerleader/Brutus Alumni Events when my wife Katie was unable to attend, and my last visit with her in August this year. My thoughts and prayers are with all the family, especially Charlie, Lori & Andy, and the store employees. I regret that I cannot be in person to pay my last respects to this most genuine and caring Lady, but I will be there in spirit. Love You Mary! Rest in Peace until we meet again! Go Bucks! Go Army/Beat Navy!  
The Congrove Family (Doug, Katie, Max & Jackson)



Doug Congrove - December 06, 2023 at 01:11 PM



“ Beautiful Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of Mary Margaret Haley Leavitt "The Flag Lady".



December 06, 2023 at 12:44 PM

KM

“*Mary was a charismatic charmer and it was my pleasure to be with her in Washington DC on our trips to visit our lawmakers. To watch her deliver her passionate appeals for small business issues and to beg the lawmakers to only fly American made flags over the Capitol buildings was to watch poetry in motion. Her love of country and of small business was truly inspirational. God speed, Mary! Thanks for the lessons taught through your example of how to live life.*

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**Kelly Moore** - December 06, 2023 at 11:04 AM



“*Sweet Tenderness was purchased for the family of Mary Margaret Haley Leavitt "The Flag Lady".*



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December 06, 2023 at 10:59 AM

JM

“*To Mary Margaret and Family. Mary, as the second youngest of the cousins, it was my honor to grow up with you. Lots of fond memories. Road and train trips from Indianapolis to Columbus. Poochy. Laughs with and about Gramp Haley. My folks helping you and Sharon. Visiting your family at your farm. I was told you were the fastest typist in Columbus. Watching you run your own successful business. And most importantly for you being such a good person. THANK YOU. We will send a donation to the Alzheimer's Association on your behalf. May you be blessed and rest in peace. Joe and Dianne Clendenin - Santa Rosa, CA.*

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**Joe Clendenin, MD** - December 06, 2023 at 12:49 AM

LF

“ Lora & Bob Stevenson, and family. purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Mary Margaret Haley Leavitt "The Flag Lady".



Lora & Bob Stevenson, and family. - December 05, 2023 at 06:15 PM



“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



Rutherford Funeral Homes - December 05, 2023 at 04:45 PM



“ With Distinction was purchased for the family of Mary Margaret Haley Leavitt "The Flag Lady".



December 05, 2023 at 04:44 PM

TG

“ The Franklin County GOP purchased the Be My Love Bouquet with Red Roses for the family of Mary Margaret Haley Leavitt "The Flag Lady".



The Franklin County GOP - December 05, 2023 at 04:42 PM

TG

“ The Franklin County GOP planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mary Margaret Haley Leavitt "The Flag Lady".

The Franklin County GOP - December 05, 2023 at 04:42 PM

MR

“ Metro Relief purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Mary Margaret Haley Leavitt "The Flag Lady".



Metro Relief - December 05, 2023 at 03:56 PM

MR

“ Metro Relief planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mary Margaret Haley Leavitt "The Flag Lady".

Metro Relief - December 05, 2023 at 03:56 PM