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*In Loving Memory*  
**CELEBRATING A LIFE**

**Mary Louise Swenningson**

***Date & Place of Birth***

March 12, 1939 ~ Breckenridge, Minnesota

***Returned To Her Heavenly Father***

January 13, 2021 ~ New Town, North Dakota

***Graveside Service***

Wednesday, January 20, 2021 at 1:00 pm  
North Dakota Veterans Cemetery ~ Mandan, North Dakota

***Officiating***

Pastor Sarah Sorenson

***Pallbearers***

Jake Leppell    Wesley Leppell    Eli Leppell  
Rocky Fladeland    Jasiah Norton    Willy Roper

***Honorary Pallbearers***

Rodney O'Brien, Justin Norton, Jordan Norton, Jace O'Brien,  
Zander Fladeland & Many More Family & Friends

***Music***

"Three Wooden Crosses" - Randy Travis  
"Go Rest High On That Mountain" - Vince Gill  
"Holes In The Floor Of Heaven" - Steve Wariner

***Military Rites***

North Dakota Veterans Honor Guard

***Arrangements By: Springan Stevenson of Stanley, ND***



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*In Loving Memory Of*

**Mary Louise Swenningson**

March 12, 1939 - January 13, 2021

Mary Louise Nelson was born on March 12th, 1939 in Breckenridge, MN to (Mom) Mary Louise Nelson. They lived on a farm located 8 Miles North of Stanley, ND until moving to Flaxton, ND where Mary found work as a housekeeper on a farm of Charles Ragnell. It was while working there that she met her husband (Dad) Chris J. Christensen. Then moved to the farm in 1944 to become their housekeeper.

Mary's parents then got married on November 11, 1945. Mary Lou went to a one room county school in Richland #2 from grades 1-8 then graduated in Burke County Courthouse in Bowbells, ND in May of 1953 and was also the last student to graduate from there. She then started High School in Flaxton for two years then transferred to Stanley where she graduated in May of 1957!

In June of 1957 Mary Lou then join the Women's Army Corps (WAC'S), entered in service at Fargo, ND was sent to Fort McClelland (Aniston) Alabama for basic training then on to Fort Sam Houston (San Antonio) Texas for Medical Training then onto Fitzsimmons Army Hospital in Denver, CO to work as a Medic. On December 1958 Mary Lou went to Heidelberg, Germany to work in station hospital. While there she met George Firth O'Brien of Philadelphia, PA then they married and their twin daughters (Linda Marie and Laura Kay) were born in Heidelberg on November 14th, 1961. Mary Lou was discharged then from the Women's Army Corp's (WAC'S) in 1961. Then in May of 1962 they moved to Ft. Riley (Junction City) Kansas. While living there their sons (John Patrick born in 1963 and then James Christopher in 1964) were born.

Then in 1965 Mary Lou and her children moved to Flaxton, ND and lived on the farm while George was serving in the Vietnam. In 1966 they moved to Munich, Germany and in 1968 moved to Philadelphia, PA. Mary Lou and children then moved back to Stanley, ND in November 1972 and divorced March 1973.

In August 1973 Mary Lou began working at Mountrail County Sheriff's Department as a dispatcher for Sheriff Ralph Hamre and then in 1998 dispatched for Sheriff Ken Halvorson till 2002. There a lot more changes throughout those years but that is a whole other story by itself!

In April 1979 Mary Lou married Rickey Loren Swenningson in Stanley, ND where they continued to raise their children and living a great life with one another.

Mary Lou enjoyed spending time with family and friends....especially her time with her grandchildren and great-grandchildren that kept her going! She loved sharing stories and of course we all can't forget all the things she has taught us throughout the days of her life. She loved reading books and also reading to her great-grandchildren as well. Mary had a mind that was always solving problems, mysteries and loved working on family genealogy. She was a very tuff woman and didn't take any crap from anyone.....She was always straight to the point! She was the rock to many people! We will all continue to miss them short phone call visits to always check in! We all know she is at peace now with the one's she loved the most! This ends the saga of Mary Lou for now!

Mary Lou is survived by daughters, Linda Marie Belstad (Adrian) of New Town, ND and Laura Kay Norton (Rocky) of Watford City, ND; son, John Patrick O'Brien (Annette) of Ogden, Utah; 7 grandchildren, Rodney O'Brien of Minot ND, Justin Norton (Krystal) of Rock Springs, WY, Tina Leppell (Wesley) of Keene ND, Savannah Norton of Williston ND, Adriana Fladeland (Rocky) of Ross, ND, Hazel Belstad (Willy) of St. Regis, MT, Jordan Norton (Mariah) of Watford City ND; 3 Mexican Granddaughters Brissa, Lluvia, and Andrea; 13 great-grandchildren, Jake, Kellie, Eli, Jasiah, Ayla, McKenley, Maleah, Justice, Jace, Zander, Ella, Jaelynn and Nala; stepdaughters, Glenda, Sonya, Shawn and Barb and many more; stepson, Pepi and Jerry Clark (Cindy) a special family friend that continued to help out throughout the years!

She is preceded in death by her husband, Ricky Swenningson; mother, Mary Christensen & father, Chris J. Christensen; son, James O'Brien and many more family & friends!

The Family would like to thank everyone for all of the many thoughtful prayers and condolences at this time.

