



## Frankie Lee (Bird) Plager

July 3, 1931 - February 23, 2015

Frankie Lee (Bird) Plager was born on July 3rd, 1931, in Grover, North Carolina, the fifth daughter of Cora and Benjamin Franklin Bird. After a brief illness at the age of 83, she died in Bloomington, Indiana, February 23rd, 2015. Frankie loved her home near Griffey Lake in Bloomington, where she resided for the last 35 years.

She was a basketball stalwart at Grover High School at a time when not many girls were playing basketball. She attended Clark University for two years in the late 1940s, before transferring to the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, where she graduated with a degree in sociology in 1952. Frankie married a fellow student, S. J. Plager, in 1951, and after graduation the couple moved to Gainesville, Florida, where Frankie worked for the State social welfare department helping impoverished families find assistance and began raising their 3 children.

The family moved to Urbana, Illinois, in 1963, where Frankie was a homemaker and a faculty wife. She was a gourmet cook and enjoyed entertaining at home. She volunteered extensively with community activities. Some of her many services included assisting at Planned Parenthood, working with the Junior League, counseling at a day-care center for emotionally disturbed adults, intake interviewing at a well-child clinic, discussion leader and

radio chairman for the League of Women Voters, art museum tour guide, Urbana Planning Commission member, and initiator-facilitator for a par course (fitness trail) for the Urbana Parks Department.

In 1977, the family moved to Bloomington, Indiana, and after her subsequent divorce, Frankie returned to work full-time as a Medical Social Worker at the Bloomington Hospital. She specialized in addressing the needs of long-term oncology patients and their families and also provided training in social services to the hospital physicians and staff. She was recognized numerous times over her 25 years with the hospital as an outstanding employee. Most meaningful to her were the countless thank you cards from her patients and their families for helping them through a difficult time.

Frankie was outgoing, compassionate and curious. She appreciated and supported the arts, attending plays, musical performances, and most especially attending Indiana Hoosier basketball games. She claimed to attend "church" every Saturday evening when Prairie Home Companion aired. She liked good food and wine, folk & country & bluegrass music, and lively conversation. She continued to be active throughout her life, cross-country skiing, sailing and, most of all, playing tennis. She enjoyed being in a play group, a dinner group and, up until the end, the challenge and camaraderie of several regular bridge groups. Her great sense of humor served her well, and she knew not to take herself too seriously. Her companionship will be greatly missed.

She is pre-deceased by her parents Cora and Benjamin Bird, her sisters Katherine Bird, Elizabeth Throop and Marjorie Ferguson. She is survived by her sister Lenora Morris of Kings Mountain, NC; her 3 children: Anna Plager (Chris Nye) of Fairbanks, Alaska; David Plager (Martha Helveston) of Indianapolis, Indiana; Daniel Plager

(Pam Mullins) of Tampa, Florida; and two grandchildren from each of her children, respectively, Ben and Amy Nye, Henry and Charles Plager, Samantha and Max Plager. She leaves many nieces and nephews and other loved ones.

A remembrance gathering will be held at her home, 3105 Browncliff Lane, on Saturday, March 7th, 4 to 7 PM, with an informal ceremony at 5 PM. All are welcome to attend. Her ashes will be buried in the Bird family plot in Grover, North Carolina. Donations in her name may be made to the charity of your choice.

Allen Funeral Home and Crematory 4155 South Old Highway 37 is handling the arrangements and online condolences may be sent to the family at [www.allenfuneralhome.org](http://www.allenfuneralhome.org).

# Tribute Wall

LO

“ *My dear Aunt Frankie... She raised three wonderful children and taught them to live life respectfully, sincerely, and on their own terms. She did not always take the most popular path; regardless, everyone respected her because she was true to herself. In my mind's eye, I see her looking forward. Listening. Thinking.*

*Aunt Frankie will make a great addition to whatever is next - whether or not she believes there is a next... :)*

*Lori Plager*

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**Lori Plager** - October 26, 2015 at 04:01 PM

JV

“ *As former (now retired) chaplain at Bloomington Hospital, I remember Frankie as the consummate professional. The patients and families she counseled relied on her trustworthy advice and calming presence. My fondest recollection is when I came from the room of a deceased patient visibly upset because I knew that I would not be able to conduct the patient's funeral as he had requested because I would be on vacation that had been planned well in advance. She took me aside and listened as I expressed my frustration and grief. She asked me to think about what the patient would have wanted me to do. I took the family vacation and a family friend did the funeral. I will never forget Frankie's gentle yet certain advice in my time of need.*

*May you know the comfort that comes from your mutual love and affection.*

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**John VanderZee** - October 26, 2015 at 04:01 PM

AC

“ To Frankie's family, my condolences on your loss. Frankie was our neighbor across the street on Browncliff. My mother, Marianne Quirk, was very fond of her, as was I. I will remember her humor and her kindness.

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**Anne Quirk Chafee** - October 26, 2015 at 04:01 PM

JO

“ So sorry to learn of Frankie's death. She was a good friend to my mother, Marilyn Bowie, for many years. She was a very gracious lady and I always loved seeing her out on the tennis court.

*Condolences from the Bowie family on your loss.*

*Jocelyn BowieSTRELLEY*

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**Jocelyn Bowie** - October 26, 2015 at 04:01 PM