



## Mary L. Eckardt

April 6, 1950 - May 12, 2024

Mary Louise Eckardt, 74, of Eau Claire, WI, passed away on May 12, 2024. The eldest daughter of Alvina and Donald H. Eckardt, she was born on April 6, 1950 in Sheboygan WI. Mary was a strong, compassionate, and independent woman. She loved her family and treasured the relationships she built and grew from childhood.

Mary attended North High School in Sheboygan, graduating in 1968. It was there where she first started pursuing her lifelong passions of music, journalism, photography and community service. She was editor of the school's yearbook, had roles in theatre productions, and sang in the a cappella choir. She went on to study journalism and graduated from the University of Wisconsin - Madison in 1972.

Mary's first job was as a reporter at the Merrill Daily Herald in Merrill, WI. From there, she worked at the Post-Bulletin in Rochester, MN, and by 1976 she was back in Sheboygan working at the Sheboygan Press. For the next 32 years she wrote countless stories about her home town and the wonderful people in her community. As the Sheboygan Press Community Editor, if asked if she knew a person in town, she would most likely answer, "Yes I wrote a story about them." She was a gifted journalist with the ability to talk to anyone, capturing their spirit and telling their story.

Mary was a contributing member of the community. She was an active member of the Sheboygan Rotary Club, and served as Rotary chairman for the Rotary High School Scholarship, Holiday Auction and Rotary Citizen of the

Year event. Mary served on the Board of Directors of Safe Harbor and Lifestream Women's Services. She was also named "Lifestream Woman of the Year." Mary was a member of the Writers Guild, YMCA Horizon Club and was a founding member of Sheboygan Visual Arts.

Mary cared deeply for the children in the community. She volunteered at Warriner High School and had adopted a 3rd grade class at Sheridan School, assisting each week with reading and teaching them about Sheboygan. Mary was a Big Sister in the Big Brothers Big Sister program.

She loved books and music. At home or in her car, be it classical or Broadway show tunes, she was always listening and singing to music. Mary had sang in the St. Clement's Choir, Holy Name Choir, and the South Shore Choral in Fond du Lac. She was known for her love of interior decorating, cooking old family recipes and entertaining friends. She was a loving sister to her siblings, nieces and nephews.

Mary is survived by sister Betty Donovan of Green Bay, WI and her children, Katie Sousek (Kirk and children, Vada, Vaughn and Ivy) of Appleton WI, Michael Donovan (Colleen and children Molly and Jack) of Springfield, VA, Mary Boyle (Michael and children Henry and Maureen) of Plymouth, NH, and Christine Wyman (Scott and children Chase, Parker and Allison) of DePere, WI, sister BJ Eckardt, of Belmont, NH, brother Donald Eckardt, Jr and wife Lynne of Canton MI and their children, Alexandra Derec (Jason and children Abigail and Nicholas) of Park Ridge, IL, and Donald Eckardt, III (Paige) of Arlington, VA, and sister, Lisa Houfek of Plymouth, WI. Mary is predeceased in death by her parents. Other loving survivors include her extended family of cousins and her close circle of friends.

A Celebration of Life will be held at a later date.

For those who wish, memorial donations in Mary's name may be sent to The Mead Library Foundation, 710 North 8th Street, Sheboygan WI 53081 or online at [meadpl.org](http://meadpl.org) and Sheboygan County YMCA, 812 Broughton Drive, Sheboygan, WI 53081 or online at [Sheboygancountyymac.org](http://Sheboygancountyymac.org).

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# Tribute Wall

JG

“ I had the pleasure of May as a classmate at North High School and then as a fellow journalist at The Sheboygan Press for her entire career with the paper. She was always a joy to be with and her dedication to the Sheboygan community was unmatched. My deepest sympathy to Mary’s siblings and many friends.

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**Joe Gulig** - May 15, 2024 at 10:33 AM

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*I loved reading Mary's feature articles and complimented her often. I was features editor/writer at The Review and felt a special bond with Mary. The good Lord blessed Mary mightily with ABUNDANT TALENT! My deepest sympathy to her family. Rest in peace, Mary. Sincerely, Sue Mroz*

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**Sue Mroz** - May 15, 2024 at 12:07 PM