

## Caroline Elsie Filley



1941-2024

Obituary published on Legacy.com by James Crowder Funeral Home - Webster/Clear Lake on May 8, 2024.

Carolyn Elsie Filley, nee Kepner, passed away peacefully on the morning of May 3, 2024, with her husband, Melvin 'Mel' Richmond, by her side. Carolyn was born in [St. Paul, Minnesota](#) on March 6, 1941. She was adored by her parents, Raymond and Elsie Kepner; he was a milkman, miner, and carpenter; she was a wartime bomb rack inspector and office assistant. In search of employment opportunities, the family moved about the country, living in places such as [Stillwater, Minnesota](#), [Rice Lake, Wisconsin](#), followed by Lead and [Rapid City, South Dakota](#).

During this time, Carolyn and her brother, Craig, learned to play the accordion and thrive in winter sports such as sledding and skiing. Starting school at an early age based on testing results, she consistently achieved excellent grades, which she later recounted to her children regularly. Carolyn served as a baton twirler and cheerleader at several of the schools she attended. In 1956, the family moved to [Tucson, Arizona](#), where she graduated from Pueblo High School and later from the University of Arizona with a degree in education. While often completing 18-19 hours per semester, she worked part-time at the campus library and was a member of Pi Omega Pi, a national scholastic honor society.

In 1962, she became a "stewardess" for Continental Airlines, hoping to land a home base in Los Angeles, Denver or El Paso. However, she was assigned to Houston, where she met Charles 'Chuck' Filley, a Naval Academy graduate and member of the NASA team in the days preceding the opening of the Johnson Space Center. They married in February 1964 and soon welcomed daughter Kimberly, followed by their son, Mark, better known as 'Tag.'

With short stints as a substitute teacher and real estate agent, she spent most of her career working for Webb, Murray & Associates, a fire protection and safety company. In 1978, she started working as an administrative assistant and was the fourth employee to join the company. Over the years, she worked hard and climbed the career ladder to eventually become the head of personnel for this successful organization of 350 people. After 35 years of dedicated service, she retired from the position.

Always up for adventure, Carolyn's wanderlust took her around the country and the world as she checked off her list of national parks and world wonders. She loved a good time and was just as much at home at a California wine tasting as sipping a cold one in a local dive bar. At one of these local haunts, she became reacquainted with Mel Richmond while attending a NASA Lunar Recovery Division reunion. The two were gleefully married in February 2012 and enjoyed cruising, live sports, country music concerts and attending

various events with their children and grandchildren. Carolyn's competitive nature meant she excelled at games such as dominoes, Rummikub and the occasional hand of blackjack or poker.

Carolyn was known for her perky personality, sense of style, artistic creativity, compassionate kindness, bright smile and beautiful blue eyes. She is preceded in death by her parents and first husband, Chuck Filley. She leaves the rest of us with many wonderful memories that offer a mixture of joy, love and yearning for more. Surviving family members include her husband, Mel Richmond; children Kimberly Campbell (Bryan) and Tag Filley (Alicia); and grandchildren Collin, Aidan, Alaina and Evan Filley, and Savannah and Sophia Campbell. Others include her brother Craig Kepner (Betty); nephews and niece Todd, Scott and Julie; Mel's children Taryn (Jack) and Ty (Dorinda) along with many other amazing and whacky people who surrounded her with love and affection.

The family would like to thank Always Best Senior Care for their loving attention in Carolyn's final days. Carolyn was a longtime supporter of the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation and enjoyed the local arts at the Bayou Theater at the University of Houston Clear Lake. In lieu of flowers, please consider a memorial donation to these organizations.

A celebration of life will be held for Carolyn on Wednesday, May 22, 2024 at Stonehouse Manor (formerly the Jalapeño Tree restaurant) at 316 W. Nasa Road 1, Webster, TX 77598 at 2:00pm. To plant trees in memory, please visit the [Sympathy Store](#).

