



## Mary Susan Tarr

February 4, 1941 - February 9, 2021

Mary Susan Tarr, 80, of Carbondale, passed away February 9, 2021, with her family by her side.

She was born to the late Arthur Thomas Schmelter and Evelyn (Arisman), February 4, 1941, in Springfield, IL. Mary Susan graduated from Ursuline Academy in 1959 and received a Bachelor of Science in Education from Southern Illinois University 1963 & was a lifetime member of the Alumni Association.

She married James E. Tarr on June 15, 1963, and they lived together in Carbondale for 58 years.

Mary Susan is survived by her husband, James Tarr; four children: Bridget Gallagher (Dave) of Cincinnati, OH; Christine Tarr of Palatine, IL; Stephen Tarr (Kim) of Anna, TX and Daniel Tarr of Dallas, TX. She is also survived by nine loving grandchildren.

Mary Susan was a dedicated educator and was the Librarian at Unity Point School for many years until retirement. She loved reading mystery novels, was active in the Beta Sigma Phi sorority, and was a passionate crafter. She created her own quilts, note pads, her own Christmas labels and countless other cards & creations. Mary Susan was immensely proud of her family, and leaves behind nothing but beautiful memories. Her love of sweets was legendary – often evoking the donut to convey a message of positivity: “Look for the donut, not the hole!”

Funeral Services with Mass for Mary Susan Tarr will be Thursday, February 18, 2021 at 11:00 am in St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church. Interment will follow in Murdale Gardens of Memory.

Visitation will be from 9:00 am until the hour of service at the church.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in support of St. Francis Catholic church or a charity of the donor’s choice.

Crain Pleasant Grove-Murdale Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

# Cemetery

**Murdale Gardens of  
Memory**  
137 Murdale Gardens Rd  
Murphysboro, IL, 62966

# Events

- FEB**  
**18**

**Visitation**  
09:00AM - 11:00AM

St Francis Xavier Catholic Church  
303 S Poplar St, Carbondale, IL, US, 62901-2709
- FEB**  
**18**

**Funeral Service**  
11:00AM - 12:00PM

St Francis Xavier Catholic Church  
303 S Poplar St, Carbondale, IL, US, 62901-2709
- FEB**  
**18**

**Interment**  
12:00PM - 12:30PM

Murdale Gardens of Memory  
137 Murdale Gardens Rd, Murphysboro, IL, US,  
62966

# Comments

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“ CCHS Class of 1967 purchased the Medium Dish Garden for the family of Mary Susan Tarr.



**CCHS Class of 1967** - February 23 at 11:34 AM

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“ Bridget Gallagher lit a candle in memory of Mary Susan Tarr



**Bridget Gallagher** - February 20 at 10:18 PM

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## “ Eulogy for Mary Susan Tarr, PART 3 OF 3

Realizing a lifelong dream, Mother and Dad took a St. Andrews/Father Gary sponsored tour of Italian cathedrals in Rome, Florence, Sienna and more. They didn't take us all on that trip, but what beautiful pictures they have!

Mother's faith was gained from her loving parents, Catholic school career, and the love of her life, Dad. Mother taught us the poem Lovely Lady Dressed in Blue, the Hail Mary, Our Father, and Prayer to the Guardian Angel. Our mother's faith was and is truly inspiring. Her grace and strength in affliction are a precious gift that we will carry for the rest of our lives. In her hours of suffering, Mother turned to her faith and the Blessed Mother for comfort. The day Bridget was married, she received a carefully kept package of baby cards from when she was born. In this treasure was a letter from Mother's mother, the Irish Evelyn Josephine Arisman Schmelter. It spoke of the courage and strength Grandmother was proud that Mother possessed. Evelyn called her "my little soldier" and praised her lovingly. As a family, we were able to witness this courage and strength our whole lives right through to Mother's last day. And we will miss it.

Fifty-two reasons why we love our Wife, Mother, and Grandmother? This small homage only scratches the surface of Mary Susan Tarr's legacy. Yes, we call her blessed and we know that she will help the angels keep charge of us, and then help to prepare a place for us when we meet again...probably at a Heavenly pool party with cards, dice, and incredible, unfailing love.

**Bridget Gallagher** - February 20 at 09:53 PM

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## “ Eulogy for Mary Susan Tarr, PART 2 OF 3

Mother arranged summer visits with Hannah, Logan, Denise, Madison, Olivia, and Garrett and enrolled them in SIU golf, tennis, engineering, and art camps. Jenna Beth was too young to attend camps, but she later learned some card games and how to cut Christmas snowflakes with Grammie. Mother was a fan of the arts and exposed everyone to plays at SIU and trips to shows and museums in St. Louis, Chicago, Cincinnati, Nashville and more, like the Vatican Angel and King Tut exhibits and a production of Disney's The Lion King.

Mother was a long-time member of the Beta Sigma Phi sorority in Carbondale where she met many of her long-time friends. She donated to the church and charities, helped organize events like Breakfast with Santa, the St. Francis Bazaar and was often a room mother for her kids' schools. Mother supported her kids in swimming, baseball, softball, wrestling, scouts, and more. What a generous, giving soul she had! Mother and Dad would always invite stray international colleagues and others to holiday dinner so they wouldn't be alone. Mother made Easter baskets for her adult kids until 2004 and reduced one of Danny's friends to tears by giving the girl the first Easter basket she had received since she was a child. Mother was a fantastic birthday and Christmas shopper, always seeming to know us so well. Mitchell was quite amazed by the fact that she never forgot our birthdays, even before Facebook.

As a career, Mother served as a children's librarian at the Springfield Lincoln Library. After that, she developed the library system for Christopher schools from the ground up and served many years as a substitute teacher at Carbondale Community High School. Until retirement she served as Librarian at Unity Point School exposing children to the wonders of reading, imagination, and learning...and more ghost and alien stories. During the last few weeks of her illness, Mother became a fan of books on tape from the library. We listened to series like The Chronicles of Narnia and A Wrinkle in Time, mixing them with Captain's Courageous, Braiding Sweetgrass, and the last book she ever listened to, The Secret Garden.

Mother had a gentle wisdom that graced us all. She and Dad gave superior parental guidance, according to Christine and Stephen, whether we took the advice or not. On meager teacher salaries our parents fully provided for us in every way. Perhaps their biggest gift was being so in love with each other and all of us. Rachel and Hannah attended SIU and each fell very ill at different times. They turned to Mother and Dad who delivered quick rides to the hospital and --medicinal-- egg drop soup. Comfort, consolation, joy, encouragement, and loving care were freely given to all. Because they taught their children to choose life, Mother and Dad have nine grandchildren, who were blessed with being loved by such amazing people.

Mother and Dad traveled regularly to Cincinnati, Chicago, Georgia, Florida, and Texas to see their kids and grandkids on birthdays, Grandparent's Days, graduations, celebrations, sports events, and "just because." Fond memories of pool parties in backyards and hotels during these visits are many. Out would come the cards and dice, and hours disappeared in moments. Mother always had the gift of positivity, smiling, and keeping the mood light and loving. On car rides and trips, great sing-

along with “snappy tunes” would occur with this crazy pair. Chantilly Lace, Yellow Polka Dot Bikini, and The Lion Sleeps Tonight- where every person took a different singing part of the song, were sung loud and long. Other trips took Mother and Dad to Las Vegas, the Gulf Coast of Florida, Yellowstone National Park, Alaska and several cruises, one of which was for their 25th wedding anniversary. They took the whole family along!

**Bridget Gallagher** - February 20 at 09:51 PM

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“ Eulogy for Mary Susan Tarr  
February 4, 1941 - February 9, 2021

St Francis Xavier Catholic Church  
Carbondale, Illinois

Proverbs 31:10-31  
New American Bible (Revised Edition)  
IX. Poem on the Woman of Worth

10 Who can find a woman of worth?  
Far beyond jewels is her value.  
11 Her husband trusts her judgment;  
he does not lack income.  
12 She brings him profit, not loss,  
all the days of her life.  
13 She seeks out wool and flax  
and weaves with skillful hands.  
14 Like a merchant fleet,  
she secures her provisions from afar.  
15 She rises while it is still night,  
and distributes food to her household,  
a portion to her maidservants.  
16 She picks out a field and acquires it;  
from her earnings she plants a vineyard.  
17 She girds herself with strength;  
she exerts her arms with vigor.  
18 She enjoys the profit from her dealings;  
her lamp is never extinguished at night.  
19 She puts her hands to the distaff,  
and her fingers ply the spindle.  
20 She reaches out her hands to the poor,  
and extends her arms to the needy.  
21 She is not concerned for her household when  
it snows- all her charges are doubly clothed.  
22 She makes her own coverlets;  
fine linen and purple are her clothing.  
23 Her husband is prominent at the city gates  
as he sits with the elders of the land.  
24 She makes garments and sells them,  
and stocks the merchants with belts.  
25 She is clothed with strength and dignity,  
and laughs at the days to come.  
26 She opens her mouth in wisdom;  
kindly instruction is on her tongue.  
27 She watches over the affairs of her household,  
and does not eat the bread of idleness.  
28 Her children rise up and call her blessed;

her husband, too, praises her:  
29 "Many are the women of proven worth,  
but you have excelled them all."  
30 Charm is deceptive and beauty fleeting;  
the woman who fears the LORD is to be praised.  
31 Acclaim her for the work of her hands,  
and let her deeds praise her at the city gates.

As a gesture of love and honor several years ago, granddaughter Hannah compiled a deck of cards for our Wife, Mother and Grammie/Mimi, Mary Susan Tarr, titled "52 Reasons Why We Love You." Each child and grandchild put their reasons on pieces of paper and Hannah glued them to a deck of cards. As the scripture says, "Acclaim her for the works of her hands, and let her deeds praise her at the city gates."

Mother was a passionate crafter. She could knit, crochet, embroider, quilt, sew, paint and more. She enjoyed reading and playing cards. There was always a deck of cards and a set of dice in her purse, ready to play at a moment's notice. Christine says Mother had the ability to pull out the perfect recipe in seconds. She loved cooking and planning family and seasonal parties. Popcorn was her favorite snack, and we share the secrets of her popping skill. Popcorn went perfectly with afternoon and evening movies that were her passion. From classics like The Thin Man series, Flower Drum Song, and Paleface to Agatha Christie's Miss Marple and Poirot to Father Brown and BBC mysteries. Most surprisingly, Mother was a fan of Kill Bill I and II. She said the violence didn't bother her because, "it just wasn't realistic for that skinny girl to beat up all those people!" Mother also enjoyed comedies and good old westerns. Due to her penchant for Native American culture, she was in her element during a trip to the Black Hills of South Dakota and surrounding states. Logan recalls all of the "cool stories" Mother would impart about native Americans, ghosts, and aliens. Her love of knowledge ran deep. While pregnant with Bridget, she shared a Shakespeare class at SIU. Later she took adult ed. classes in photography, bread baking, candy making, and Chinese cooking taught by a friend testing out the recipes in her soon-to-be-published cookbook. Mother even learned to can her own jellies and vegetables, a knack that Rachel has inherited.

**Bridget Gallagher** - February 20 at 09:46 PM

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“ My condolences to the Tarr family. I heard the news yesterday and spoke to Mike this morning. I remember Mary from her days serving as a substitute teacher at CCHS keeping young men who thought themselves as clever in line and in check, a gentle talent shared by her husband.  
All my best to the family, Matt Rice.

**Matt Rice** - February 19 at 11:49 PM

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“ I was so sorry to hear of Susan's passing. I enjoyed working as a parent volunteer in the Unity Point library when my children were students at Unity Point. My condolences to Jim and all the family!  
Jill Berube.

**Jill Berube** - February 18 at 03:05 PM

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“ We are so sorry to hear of Susan's passing. Our thoughts and prayers with all of you.  
The Furby Family.

**Leanne Furby** - February 17 at 07:38 PM

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“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Mary Susan Tarr.



February 17 at 06:31 PM

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“ To Jim and all the family: I am so sorry for your great loss. You are in my thoughts and prayers. I won't be able to be there Thursday, but you will especially be in my thoughts that day. God bless you all.

**Brenda Dahmer** - February 16 at 07:29 PM

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“ Mrs. Tarr instilled in me a love of reading and books that i still hold over 20 years later. Thank you for everything.



**Hannah Davis (neé Stanger)** - February 16 at 06:12 PM

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“ Thelma and Stanley Rhodes purchased the Guiding Light Bouquet for the family of Mary Susan Tarr.



**Thelma and Stanley Rhodes** - February 16 at 01:38 PM

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“ Pink Potpourri Bouquet was purchased for the family of Mary Susan Tarr.



February 16 at 12:27 PM

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“ she was a great support to the best teacher ever she was always so happy same as jim so sorry for your loss jim sincerely darren henderson

**DARREN HENDERSON** - February 15 at 11:58 AM

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“ Medium Dish Garden was purchased for the family of Mary Susan Tarr.



February 14 at 08:22 PM

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“ Jet, so sorry for you and your families loss.  
You will be in my thoughts and prayers. Mrs. Tarr was such a sweet lady!  
Sincerely,  
Angie James

Angie James - February 14 at 03:38 PM

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“ Jim and Family, I did not have the pleasure of getting to know Susan. But Jim, from all that you said and shared when we worked together in WED, I could tell she was a special lady. It sounds as if each of you has a ton of good memories to hold onto in the coming years. Sending my condolences and a big hug to you Jim. Laura Cates Duncan

Laura Duncan - February 14 at 03:18 PM

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“ Jim, So very sorry to hear of Susan's passing. A lot of our passed friends and families will greet her in HIS house. Bill Atteberry

Bill Atteberry - February 14 at 09:17 AM

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“ Mary Susan, my beautiful Bride of 57 + years. Until death did us part . . . we will be together again in the house of the Lord. Jim.

James Tarr - February 13 at 10:35 PM

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“ Jim, you may not remember me but when I saw your wife's picture, I immediately thought of you. Sorry about Mrs Tarr, and I wish you the best. I always thought highly of you and the way you conducted your self. David Lee

David Lee - February 13 at 07:49 PM

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“ I am so sorry to hear about Susan's passing. I loved talking with her and she was a great role model. Jim, you and Susan were a great pair and I am so sorry for you and your family that she is gone. However, she leaves behind a bright light in all she accomplished and in the family which will continue her legacy.

Vicky Turl

Vicky Turl - February 13 at 12:32 PM

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“ Dear Mr. Tarr and Family,  
You and the family are in my thoughts and prayers for the loss of such a sweet lady. This loss will be shared by so many people.  
I remember her as the Unity Point librarian, seeing her in my younger years at the Bogie Hole and various functions and events throughout my life. Growing up with you, your wife and kids have given me many fond memories. I am truly thankful for knowing her.

Dan Chester - February 13 at 12:27 PM

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“ Dear Mr. Tarr, we are sorry to hear of Mrs. Tarr's passing. You both were great teachers, mentors and most of all friends. We are blessed to have you in our lives, especially our younger years when your guidance mattered so much. Alan and Sandy Diedrick.

Alan and Sandy Diedrick - February 13 at 12:00 PM

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“ Sending my condolences to Jet and family. Mrs. Tarr was always a delight to know. Remembering her at school functions, Bogie Hole Cashier Section, Mrs.Claus at Christmas times, just everywhere being a faithful Momma to all in her paths. Keep her legacy alive in your hearts, minds, and souls and rest assured Jesus continues to love her more in heaven as angels get in that big mansion up above. Prayers, hugs. She is loved by many.



**Karen McNeely McMinn** - February 13 at 10:15 AM

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“ Bill and I are so sad to learn of Susan's passing. I will miss being able to commiserate with her about our internet and cable tv problems. She was a great neighbor with a wonderful loving family. We send our sympathy and love.

Jane Boyd

**Jane Boyd** - February 13 at 09:32 AM

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“ So sorry to hear of Susan's passing . May Gods presence and peace be with you in these days ahead .

**Roger Crews** - February 13 at 08:29 AM

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“ Jim & family - so very sorry to learn of Susan's passing. Bill & I are currently in Arizona .  
Susan was & will always be remembered as a happy person wit always a smile on her face and Love in her heart for you and her family. May she Rest In Peace with our creator  
Betty & Bill Springer

**Betty & Bill Springer** - February 13 at 08:15 AM

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“ Dear Mr. Tarr and family,  
Thinking of you all at this time. Prayers for comfort and peace....Jim Temple and family, Barbie, Jim, and Amy...



**Barbara Temple-Huppert** - February 13 at 01:01 AM

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“ Small Garden Dish was purchased for the family of Mary Susan Tarr.



February 13 at 12:16 AM

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“ Mr Tarr, our thoughts and prayers are with you and the family. She was such a sweet, sweet lady who will be missed by so many. Prayers that in time, your many wonderful memories will ease your sorrow. Love. Jim & Sue Davis

**Sue Davis** - February 12 at 10:49 PM

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“ Jim and Family,  
I send sympathy and prayers from the heart to all of you!  
Jan Greeley-Squires Bononi  
Gary's "favorite" sister

**Jan Bononi** - February 12 at 10:22 PM

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“ Susan Tarr and I have known each other for years and enjoyed our “sorority” years together. She was one of a kind, never talked about anyone, and her children must have been perfect; she. never talked about them. She was just a very nice person. I will truly miss her.

Ruth Ann "Vagner" - February 12 at 07:45 PM

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“ Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet was purchased for the family of Mary Susan Tarr.



February 12 at 02:23 PM

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“ Dear Mr. Tarr, Stephen, Danny, Bridget, Christine, & the Family - My sincere condolences on the passing of Mrs. Tarr. She was always such a sweet and kind lady, and I know a terrific Mom. She will be looking down on you all every day with much love! Fondly, Maria (Wilson) Patterson & Family

Maria (Wilson) Patterson - February 12 at 01:01 PM



“ Maria. Thank you for your sympathy and concerns We certainly enjoyed the things you dropped off. Hi to your mom and dad. We will tell, Danny of your contact! God bless you..

Jetson1@galaxycable.net - February 22 at 11:52 PM

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“ Jim, I know your family will miss Susan terribly. I was sorry to hear what you all have been going through. May God provide the peace and comfort only He can give.

Lillian Greathouse

**Lillian Greathouse** - February 11 at 01:28 PM



“ Please know that you're in my thoughts and prayers. My sincerest condolences for an incredibly great loss.. I'll never forget Susan who was a very caring and compassionate individual. Dearly missed!

**Larry E. Swope** - February 15 at 07:40 PM



“ Thank you Larry.. I may take up golf again.

**Jetson1@galaxycable.net** - February 22 at 11:51 PM