



Dayle Marie Irwin

OCT 4, 1950 - MAR 14, 2013



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Table of Contents

Obituary	Page 3
Tribute Wall	Page 5



Dayle Marie Irwin

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Dayle Marie Irwin. Born Oct. 4, 1950 ' Died March 14, 2013.

Dayle was the daughter of Rex Oscar and Carolyn Marie Patrick Cochran. She was named for her uncle, Dale Cochran, who was killed in Normandy during WWII. She was a 1968 graduate of Stephen Decatur High School and a 1972 graduate of Eastern Illinois University, with a B.A. in History. While at Eastern, she was a Hobart-Heller Scholar in both History and English.

Dayle married Thomas Merideth in 1969, and they were divorced in 1984. This marriage produced a son, Jamie Rhett Cochran Merideth.

Dayle married Michael D. Irwin on July 27, 1996, and they remained happily married until her death. She gained two step-sons, Jonathon Paul Irwin and Jeffery Donald Irwin.

Dayle was retired from the Decatur Public Library, where she worked for 29 years as a Librarian Assistant and director of the Local History Room.

Dayle was a passionate student of Decatur's history and turned that passion into writing and programming. As a result, she was the author and co-author of five books on local history. She was sought after as a speaker on local history and developed an outstanding first person program, taking on the persona of one of her heroes, Jane Martin Johns. She has been called 'Decatur's Historian' by those who admired her work.

She served on boards, including the Macon County Historical Society, Decatur History Foundation and Decatur Is Growing Gardeners (D.I.G.G).

Dayle was a tireless advocate for unions and disadvantaged citizens of her hometown, working as Chapter Chair for the library's branch of AFSCME, union delegate to Decatur Trades and Labor, member and officer of Letter Carriers Auxiliary 153, and site coordinator for the Letter Carriers Food Drive.

As a result of her community service, she garnered numerous awards and accolades.



Obituary

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Among these are:

The Arthur Ploeger Award from the Historical and Architectural Sites Commission;
The James H. Ragan Award from the Decatur Trades and Labor;
The Outstanding Decatur Public Schools Alumni from the Decatur Public Schools Foundation.

Dayle leaves to cherish her memory: husband Michael; son Jamie (Cassie Pollard), Rochester, IL; step-sons Jonathan Irwin (Jaclyn), Riverton, IL, Jeffrey Irwin (Kacy Davis), Mahomet, IL; mother Carolyn Robertson and step-father Zack, Decatur; brothers Steve (Chris), Champaign, IL, James (Donna), Decatur; sisters Mary Alice Allen, (Jim), Decatur, Ann Meeker (Tom), Muscatine, IA; grandchildren Julia Dream Merideth, Lilly Marie Merideth and Aiden Joseph Merideth; step-grandchildren Mathew Irwin, Jaycen Irwin, Desiree Irwin, Devin Irwin, Haley Whitsel, Lauren Nicole O'Neal, Mary Alice Irwin, Broderick Irwin; nephews Cody Cochran, Koleton Cochran; niece Kylie Cochran; numerous aunts, uncles, and cousins.

Dayle was preceded in death by her father Rex Oscar Cochran; grandparents Willis and Alice Cochran, Ira and Edythe Patrick.

Memorials may be made to Decatur Is Growing Gardeners (D.I.G.G.), in care of Michael Irwin.

Visitation will be on Tuesday, Mar. 19, from 5 to 8 pm at Graceland/Fairlawn Funeral Home. Services will be at 11 am Wednesday, March 20. Interment will be at Hewitt Cemetery, Lovington, IL.

The family of Dayle Marie Irwin is being served by the Graceland/Fairlawn Funeral Home, 2091 N. Oakland Ave. Decatur, IL. Please view the online obituary, send condolences, and share memories at www.gracelandfairlawn.com.



Tribute Wall

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RF

Roberta Engdale Froemke posted:

My family shared many childhood memories with the Cochran family. May God be with your family today and always. Berta Engdale

March 21 at 5:05 PM

RF

Roberta Engdale Froemke posted:

Lit a candle in memory of Dayle Marie Irwin

March 21 at 5:00 PM

CW

Claire White posted:

Dayle touched so many lives with her strength, love and joy. She will be missed by so many people all across the world. Memories and love will fill the hearts of each and every one of us. I shall always have a little smile and giggle when I look at a Truck.....Go Well, Dearest Dayle. My thoughts are with you, Mike and Family. Claire White / Tidmum. Chippenham, Wiltshire. UK.

March 20 at 1:53 PM

AG

Anita Colyer Graham posted:

Dayle, we are missing you, my friend. Your corner of the Internets is way too quiet. ?? Sharing a blog posting I wrote in Dayle's honor: <http://www.blipfoto.com/entry/2854913> . Sending condolences to family and all who love Dayle.

March 20 at 4:47 AM

DK

Darlene Metzger Kelm posted:

I was so happy to be able to share fond memories with you and Dayle at our last high school reunion, Mike. It is so nice to know you had all those wonderful years with Dayle and I pray that those memories will soften the pain you feel now. You have my deepest sympathy. Darlene Metzger Kelm

March 19 at 8:40 AM



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JE

Jeanne posted:

oh dayle, i never knew how much you were here in my life... i miss you more everyday...
jeanne/jamamakitty

March 18 at 3:31 PM

BM

Barbara Mclain posted:

I took this photo several years ago when the band "Butter" was playing at a gig. This is the way I will always remember Dayle. May she rest in peace.

March 17 at 1:39 PM

DS

Dave Sapp posted:

I met you first at EIU then many years later reconnected. Mike I wish you and Dayle peace. Dave Sapp

March 17 at 12:14 PM

BM

Barbara Mclain posted:

I knew Dayle when she was married to Tom, and Tom was a member of the band "Butter". I haven't see Dayle for years, but I want to send my deepest sympathy to her family. May she rest in peace.

March 16 at 6:27 PM

PD

Paula Jo Szegda-Davis posted:

Having never met Dayle in person, I still called her my friend and loved every minute I had with her. I will miss her smile, her love for her family and her joy in life! God truly has another angel at His side now. My heart hurts for those she left behind.

March 16 at 11:28 AM

AC

Ashley Cowles posted:

We shared so many laughs and had interesting conversations... I still can't believe you're gone. My heart goes out to those you leave behind. Dear Dayle, you were a great person and I'm really sad that you have left us so soon.

March 16 at 10:29 AM



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CC

Colleen "Loki" Condit posted:

Oh Dayle, how I will miss sharing silly comments. Your friendship brightened my days from afar. My heart aches for your family. Peace be with you all. ~ Loki

March 16 at 9:31 AM

TE

Tessm posted:

sigh what to say? There are no words sad enough or grand enough to encompass the loss that a life like Dayle's leaves. Poets have argued about it for ages, but my father used to say that the definition of love was simply "when you care about the other person more than you care about yourself." I have found this to be the soul and center of what we call "love". Dayle truly lived outside her own self, giving of herself so that others' lives could be better and richer, and that was pretty much all she needed to call her own life worthwhile. She was a lifesaver and a hero to her family, and there is no doubt that she always thought of them first, and herself second. True love. No better gift. A beautiful soul. Godspeed, Dayle. ?

March 16 at 8:53 AM

BB

Bernadine C. Bartus posted:

My thoughts and prayers are with you, Mike, and your entire family during this sad time. (I'm a new DIGG member.) Bernie

March 16 at 8:50 AM

TR

Tracy posted:

I am so sorry to hear about Dayle's passing. Even though many years have gone by since I last saw her, I still remember her smile. My thoughts and prayers are with the entire family during this difficult time.

March 16 at 4:10 AM

KE

Kelly posted:

Seems the best ones are always taken too soon. You are missed Dayle.

March 15 at 7:42 PM



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RS

Robin Baker Snelson posted:

Sent a gift in memory of Dayle Marie Irwin

March 15 at 7:40 PM

DE

Deanna posted:

I will miss your loving kindness. I wish I'd gotten to hug you more.

March 15 at 7:26 PM

SH

Shayna posted:

sending warm thoughts to all those who love Dayle

March 15 at 7:14 PM

GC

Glenn Cummins posted:

We met only once, she was a distant cousin. She really impressed me. Her knowledge of our family history was incredible! She was kind, outgoing, and befriended everyone she met. I will miss her as an email correspondent.

March 15 at 6:40 PM

JD

Janet Davies posted:

Many a fine conversation was had on the cheezyfrenz wall — many a heart is saddened... I send wishes for an easing of sadness for Dayle's whole family and friends. My heart goes out to you all for your loss of a wonderful Lady.

March 15 at 3:49 PM

BS

Bob Sampson posted:

Dayle was a vibrant, exciting, intelligent, committed woman who gave much to her community. Her heart beat to the march of the good fight and she threw herself into battles for the less fortunate and causes to make this world a better place. I was privileged to know her and benefit from her inspiring example. May she rest in peace and may her spirit continue to inspire others.

March 15 at 3:10 PM



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KR

Kate The Tookat Rogers posted:

Dayle was one of the strongest and most compassionate women I have ever had the privileged to meet. She had what seemed like an unerring sense of right and wrong and was not one to let another person be bullied or hurt. Her love for her family, her grandchildren, her friends and for her kitties was enormous and generous. I am happy to have known her, and so very sorry for those who have lost her, way too soon.

March 15 at 2:54 PM

AL

Alice Lium posted:

I'm sending prayers and beams to you all for courage and strength.

March 15 at 2:15 PM

GU

German Cheezfrend Upfi posted:

She was a cherished cheezfrend and I loved to read about her gardening activities in Decatur and her family. May she rest in peace until we all meet again. My thoughts are with Mike and Jamie and the rest of her family.

March 15 at 1:30 PM

MT

Mary Tomcsanyi posted:

Dayle, I am so sorry we never got to meet face to face. We will miss so very much, thank you for just being you even though it just wasn't long enough.

March 15 at 1:17 PM

TM

Terri Mcclintock posted:

Dayle welcomed me to my retirement with great joy. I knew her through a web group and she was wonderful. Thinking of Mike and her grandkids. Terri McClintock

March 15 at 12:54 PM



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SS

Susan O'shea posted:

Dayle was so happy to be married to Mike! Her pictures of their first Highland Games were radiant with her joy. She was so witty, kind, wise, and compassionate that I studied her responses to other correspondents to learn how to be that way, too. Then tragedy struck my own home and Dayle was completely with me throughout those long and dreadful two months. She also had the best joke-list going on the email circuit. And remember when you named Mac Mac? Best Beloved Dayle! I will sorely miss you and regret only that I never met you in person. See you later, Scarletkitteh! Love, Mrrp hh

March 15 at 12:53 PM

GM

Gary Minich posted:

I got acquainted with Dale years ago at the library, but I got to know her better after we both retired and could get more involved in politics. She and Mike were a good team.

March 15 at 12:51 PM

LH

Laurel Hughlett posted:

Dayle was a truly gallant lady, funny and caring. I will miss her deeply, even though we never met in real life, she was a treasured friend. Laurel A Hughlett

March 15 at 12:00 PM

PT

Pam Thomson posted:

I never got to meet Dayle but have admired her for several years. I loved reading her posts on Facebook, especially the ones that showed me her quest for social justice. I also loved her fierce protection of her grandchildren and her great love for her husband Mike. I am so sorry that she left so quickly and so early. With love from a cheezfrend, Pam

March 15 at 11:11 AM



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WZ

Wendy Zdrodowski posted:

I remember meeting her in person when she and Mike drove to see us perform at the Illinois Renaissance Faire. She was sooo sunny, and looked lovely with her freshly-dyed red hayres and her bright green scots gown. We made them all blushyfays singing a nawty song about a Smith, and Mike was mortified that even my bandmates knew the "Get in the Damned Truck" story!At a time when she should have been enjoying her well-earned retirement, she stepped up to the aid of her grandkids. I just keep thinking about those kids, and how lost her entire family will be without her.

March 15 at 10:25 AM

AS

Amy Stewart posted:

Dearest Mike and Family, We never met in person, but Dayle was nothing if not devoted to you. She spoke of you frequently, and seldom was there a conversation that did not bring up one of you. In addition, she was a devoted friend. Always the first to reach out to help someone in need, and the last to expect anything in return. She was a fierce friend. Even over the interwebs, we could see the smoke from her nostrils, if she felt one of us was being treated unfairly. I could go into any battle and feel safe with Dayle at my back. I only wish I could give back to her as much as she gave me...All My Love,ILC

March 15 at 8:32 AM

MT

Mary Tomcsanyi posted:

Dayle, I am so sorry we never met face to face. But, in many ways that didn't matter. You were loved by so many of us and we will miss you so very much. We promise to help your family the best way we can. We luv yew wif a feerse an always will.

March 15 at 8:22 AM

LA

Laurie posted:

Joseph Addison said "The greatest sweetener of human life is Friendship. To raise this to the highest pitch of enjoyment, is a secret which but few discover."Dayle, I treasure my friendship with you and will miss you in my heart, where you will always remain.Mike and family, I am so very sorry for your loss and extend my deepest sympathy to all of you.

March 15 at 7:20 AM



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Nancy Muzzy posted:

Mike and family,I was so sorry to hear of Dayle's passing. I only met you both the one time at a Trivia night, but feel I know her from her friendship with Deanna. I know she will be missed by all of you. Hold close all your wonderful memories of her as they will help to sustain you in the days that come, and know that you all are in our prayers.Nancy Muzzy

March 15 at 4:34 AM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Dayle by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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