



Nancy Collette Stevens

September 3, 1932 - July 17, 2025

Nancy Collette Stevens, 92, beloved mother, teacher, and friend, of Lake Forest, Illinois, passed away peacefully on July 17, 2025. Much loved mother of Sue and Rick (Rhoda), she prided herself on her role of wife, mother and family icon.

Nancy was born in Elmhurst, Illinois where she lived for over 60 years. Her parents were Robert and Margaret Leader. Both Bob and Margaret instilled their love of gardening, music, art and reading to their three daughters Jean Marilyn Beebe (deceased), Nancy and Andrea Biehler now residing in California. At age 22, Nancy married Richard (Dick) Byron Stevens in Elmhurst, Illinois. She was widowed at age 47 after 24 years of marriage.

Nancy attended college at Southern Illinois University and graduated from Miami of Ohio and began a teaching career in Art in Berkeley, Illinois. After raising her children, she taught first grade to “the little guys” at Jackson School in Elmhurst, Illinois for many years until she retired to help her mother. She later earned a Masters Degree in Education. After retirement, she moved to the rural Philadelphia area before returning to Illinois.

Nancy’s art background reblossomed in her later years as a prolific painter, especially of whimsical birdhouses and often gave them as gifts. Nancy enjoyed family fishing trips, traveling with her mother, a trip on the Orient

Express, rosemaling in Iowa, summers in Sante Fe, and whale watching in Baja. She found peace in her garden, joy in her cats, and comfort in watching birds. She had a special love of bunnies and squirrels which she liked to feed peanuts and cookies.

Nancy supported her community through volunteering at Northbrook United Methodist Church, St Peters United Church of Christ in Elmhurst and Epiphany Lutheran Church in Elmhurst. She later volunteered her time at the libraries at Lake Forest Place.

Nancy will be remembered as a sweet, generous soul, always helping others, especially family. She liked writing cards or sending Jacquie Lawson e-cards or playing Words with Friends to keep people in her thoughts. Her radiant blue eyes will live on in our shared memories. Behind those eyes, she was an engine of activity and planning, filling her 92 years right up until the end. She had strong opinions on how she wanted to live her life. Nancy made friends easily and greeted everyone she met with a smile and kind words. She liked clothes with sparkles, loved giving See's Candies, ordering from Amazon, and she liked all things in pink.

And finally, we extend heartfelt thanks to the nurses and staff at Lake Forest Place that made her last couple of years so, so much better through their efforts and caring. The best!

A celebration of her life will be held at Lake Forest Place, 1100 Pembridge Drive, Lake Forest, Illinois at 11:00 am on Saturday, October 25, 2025. Interment will be private.

In lieu of flowers, charitable contributions IN HER NAME would be much appreciated at these institutions:

Geneva Foundation of Presbyterian Homes: Memorials will benefit musical community programming at Lake Forest Place. Online at PresbyterianLiving.org/Foundation

Orphans of the Storm: A no-kill animal shelter in Riverwoods, IL. There will be a Bird House Garden in Memory of Nancy Stevens. Online at <https://form-renderer-app.donorperfect.io/give/orphans-of-the-storm-animal-shelter/nancy-stevens>

WFMT/WTTW: Nancy listened to classical music WFMT all her life and watched PBS (WTTW) often at night. Online at secure.wfmt.com and secure.wttw.com

Any of these charities are also available through your donor advised fund.

Funeral arrangements entrusted to Reuland & Turnbough Funeral Directors of Lake Forest at (847) 234-9649 or www.RTfunerals.com.

Cemetery Details

Mount Emblem Cemetery

520 East Grand Avenue
Elmhurst, IL 60126

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

OCT 25. 11:00 AM (CT)

Lake Forest Place
1100 Pembridge Drive
Lake Forest, IL 60045

Tribute Wall



“ I am so grateful to Nancy who gave me a wonderful place to live by matchmaking me with a beautiful condo at Ancient Tree and then insisting that I be on the condo board where I met many new friends and was easily introduced to my new single life. She was a gentle nutritious force with a sweet smile!

Stephanie Meis - August 06, 2025 at 10:08 AM