



## Linda Lee Farmer

December 5, 1949 - August 20, 2022

Linda Lee Farmer (Altomare) was born on December 5, 1949 to John Paul “Huck” Altomare and Mary Margret Altomare (Benner). Raised in the small town of Lisbon, Ohio, she grew to embrace the role of responsible older sister to her younger brother Alan. As a teen, Linda was involved in numerous clubs, committees and activities, a practice she continued throughout the rest of her life. She met her future husband, William Lester “Bill” Farmer in 1967 and soon after informed Bill that he would begin dating her. Linda graduated from David Anderson High School in Lisbon with the Class of 1968, who voted her “most sophisticated.” She went on to attend The Ohio State University where her love of the Buckeyes was forever cemented as she witnessed an undefeated National Championship season and managed to “acquire” a large portion of the goalpost from the 1968 thrashing of that team up north, which remains on display in her home to this day.

In 1972 Linda graduated from OSU with a Bachelor of Science in Education and was involved in formal teaching and learning for the next 42 years. Throughout her professional life she taught grades 1, 3, 5 and 6 in the Ohio school districts of Southern Local, Holy Trinity, Vermillion, and Sheffield-Sheffield Lake. She finished her career as a Reading Specialist and English as a Second Language teacher in the Naperville, Illinois, 203 school district. She completed a number of post-graduate courses and certifications over the years and earned a Masters of Education from Ashland University in 1999.

She was known by her students as a talented, passionate, creative and inspirational teacher, and to her peers as “dedicated and very knowledgeable,” “determined to give her students her very best,” and “a fun-loving, kind, caring and great friend whose enthusiasm was contagious.” She was continuously recognized for both her willingness and ability to tailor her methods to the individual student, ensuring that each child was challenged and that no one was left behind. However, in the interest of transparency, it should be acknowledged that she may have also been feared by some students. Back when corporal punishment was a regular occurrence in public schools, Linda was rumored to have wielded a paddle made by her father and that was adorned with the signatures of its victims (although we have no evidence that an actual spanking ever took place!).

On June 23rd, 1973 Linda joined with Bill in holy matrimony. Linda gave birth to their son Jeffrey Alan on April 9th, 1977, and to their son Jason Michael on April 15th, 1980. From 1973 to 1999 the Farmer family created friendships and memories while living in Avon Lake, Ohio. In addition to teaching full-time, Linda was active at the local Lutheran Church, including leading the senior youth group for a number of years. All these years later, a former member of that group summarized the type of influence Linda had throughout her life by simply stating that “Linda was my idol.” Also, she always made time to help lead, organize or execute events at her boy’s schools or within the neighborhood (Brookfield block parties!). As her boys grew, Linda successfully cultivated their love of sports and adventure. She threw a tighter spiral than most neighborhood dads and she was always looking to make playtime more exciting by facilitating activities that most of the other moms deemed a little too dangerous. The Farmer’s made regular use of their popup camper as Linda was always looking for ways to enrich their lives and give her boys the best childhood she could. She also tried valiantly to pass along her love of music and reading, although those lessons may not have stuck as well as she would have hoped. At her core though, Linda was a teacher. She was always

there at homework time, and was particularly skilled at answering a question with a question, no matter how much Jason pleaded, “just tell me the answer!” or really made her head spin by having the audacity to say something like “I don’t need to understand that, there’s nothing wrong with being average.” Despite her youngest’s resistance, Linda really was an expert at teaching people how to think, versus what to think. She also had the ability to switch rapidly from stringent teacher-mom to unconditionally encouraging sports-mom. She never missed one of Jeff’s or Jason’s extracurricular activities. By the early 90’s, the volume at which she delivered her support for her children during sporting events had become legendary among those who regularly found themselves within a square mile of her cheers. As her child, she instilled a feeling in you that no person could possibly love someone more than my mom loves me.

It was also in Avon Lake that the Farmer’s became a Cleveland Browns family, although Linda tempered her enthusiasm for the Browns against the fear that the Browns would eventually lead to Bill’s demise. In fact, she reportedly told him, during one of those typical games where the officiating was horrible, the coaches didn’t know what they were doing, the players couldn’t stop making mistakes, and everyone on the team was acting like they couldn’t hear Bill screaming at them from his recliner - “Bill, so help me, if you have a heart attack watching this game, I’m not even calling 911 - I will just leave you there in that chair and move away.”

Waiting until after Jason finished High School, Linda and Bill moved to Bolingbrook, Illinois in the summer of 1999 to begin the “empty nesters” phase of their lives together. While continuing to teach, Linda also embraced her new community and was quickly regarded as a sincere and reliable friend and neighbor. She was always ready to plan events that brought people together, help those in a time of need, or simply make people’s lives more enjoyable.

She was also the first one to volunteer for those tasks that needed to get done, but that no one else would step in to lead. This is the time in Linda's life when she first became a mother-in-law and grandmother. Jeff married Mandy Fay (Deaton) in 1999. Linda's first granddaughter, Kennedy Lee, came in 2001, and her second, Kaitlyn Elizabeth, was born in 2003. Linda loved and cared for her new daughter and granddaughters as much as she did her two boys. She spent a lot of time with them while Jeff was away and, astonishingly, was somehow able to help her granddaughters with school with a level of calm and patience that her son's had never seen before. Linda was also extremely proud of Mandy, especially how well she handled things during Jeff's deployments. Her first grandson, Landon Alan, was born to Jeff and Mandy in 2009, and Linda finally had a grandchild that was interested in perfecting the art of sarcasm and wise-cracks.

Linda retired from teaching following the 2014 school year and, in her words, "got in the left lane, set the cruise for 64, put my turn signal on and headed for Florida." A few months prior, Bill and Linda had completed building a home in the 55+ neighborhood of Cypress Falls in North Port, Florida. There, they dove headfirst into retirement and suddenly, it became much more difficult to get Linda on the phone as she filled her days making new friends, participating in new activities and gallivanting across the state, country and globe spending her sons' inheritances. Typical of Linda, it didn't take long for her to weave herself into the fabric of her new community. Even more typical of Linda, it didn't take long for her to transition from participant to ringleader. Apparently, there are many similarities between organizing a group of retirees and organizing a group of children. All told, it's fair to say that Linda made the most of this new phase of her life. One of her grandchildren summed up how happy and busy Grandma was by stating that it was like she was "on a perpetual spring break."

In 2020, Linda saw her son Jason get married (finally!) as the family gathered

in Destin, Florida for his wedding to Haylie Michelle (Fogt). Then on August 30th, 2021, Linda was blessed with a fourth grandchild and second grandson, when Jason and Haylie welcomed Bowen James into this world. A good friend recalled just “how very thrilled” Linda was that all she had ever dreamed of for her son was coming to fruition, and how Bo in particular, “made her world so happy these last 11 months.” As her Cypress Falls and Facebook friends can attest to, Linda was (again) the epitome of a doting grandmother. And although several hundred miles of separation presented a formidable obstacle, Linda vowed to make the trek to see Bowen once a month. For those periods in between, she was extremely thankful for Haylie’s willingness to Facetime, text videos and to teach her how to use Snapchat.

On June 23rd, 2022, Bill and Linda celebrated their 49th wedding anniversary. Their 50th was to be celebrated early, surrounded by family, during a Christmas vacation to Hawaii this December. True to form, Linda orchestrated and booked the entire adventure and already had the entire 2 weeks planned out to the minute.

On August 20th, 2022, Linda passed away with her family by her side. The deterioration of her health was sudden and her ultimate passing was particularly shocking and tragic because she was so vibrant and full of life until just a short time prior. Her absence leaves a hole in the lives of so many as she had so much left to give to those who were fortunate enough to share in her life.

Linda was a rare soul that sought involvement primarily to spread joy to the people she cared about; and she cared about everyone she met. She didn’t ask for, crave or expect recognition of any sort for her efforts; she was simply one of those “people that have no idea how wonderful they are and just wander around making the world a better place.”

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1 Y-Teens, Pep Club, Future Nurses, Student Council, National Honor Society, Quill and Scroll, French Club, President, Chorus, Concert and Marching Band (clarinet), Prom Server, Senior Attendant - Leaders, Students Voice, Buckeye Girls State, Senior Play, County Music Festival, Homecoming Court

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A "Celebration of Life" will be held December 5th from 1 - 4:00 pm. in the Cypress Falls Social Hall, 2605 Arugula Dr., North Port, FL 34289. Questions and RSVPs may be sent to [Jeffrey.Farmer16@yahoo.com](mailto:Jeffrey.Farmer16@yahoo.com).

# Previous Events

## **A Celebration of Life**

DEC 5. 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM (ET)

Cypress Falls Social Hall,  
2605 Arugula Drive  
North Port, FL 34289

# Tribute Wall



“ *Linda Lee Farmer*

October 09, 2023 at 02:01 AM



“ *Linda Lee Farmer*

January 28, 2023 at 12:09 PM



“ *Linda was a dear. My deepest sympathy to Bill and family.*

**Ashley Pike** - September 07, 2022 at 01:22 PM



“ *We were lucky enough to meet Linda at Jason and Haylie's wedding. We were so happy to welcome Linda and her family to the Fogt Family. She was so kind and loving and we were so happy to spend the wedding activities together. Her wonderful smile and generous heart will be deeply missed in our lives❤️ -Rhonda and Fritz Fogt-Shull*

**Rhonda Fogt-Shull** - September 02, 2022 at 06:20 PM



“ *Linda and I taught groups in a 14 x 20 ft Reading Room for 12 years in Naperville, Il. In addition to teaching, we took courses, attended national and state conferences, learned, laughed, shared family experiences, attended theatre, spent time in Southport NC, and enjoyed life together. She was a large part of my life and leaves me with many great memories. RIP Linda  
Love, Mary Beth*

**Mary Beth Losch** - August 24, 2022 at 08:07 PM