



Claire M. Smith

July 14, 1951 - January 5, 2015

Claire Marie Smith, 63, of Centralia, IL, passed away Monday January 5 at St. Mary's Hospital in Centralia. She was born July 14, 1951 in Danville, IL daughter of Herbert S. Fecker, Sr. and Alice Senger. She married John Marlow Smith on December 29, 1980 in Virginia Beach, Va. In addition to her husband of 34 years, she is survived by a son Joseph Simon Smith and Rachael Foltz of Belleville, Il.; two brothers, Herbert S. Fecker Jr. and Dwila Fecker of Valrico, Fla. And Ernest Joseph Fecker and Linda Fecker of Hoopston, Il. and several nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her parents and two sisters Fran Fecker Gijzen and Mary Ann Schendel. Claire worked for 28 years in the Vocational Rehabilitation field in various capacities. She retired from employment with the State of Illinois Division of Rehab Services as a Rehab Services Advisor. Claire was an active member in the National Rehab Association and also the Illinois Rehab Association where she served faithfully in many offices. She served as President, Board member and as Secretary (multiple terms) in the IRA. She was also an active team member helping to organize and oversee many conferences and workshops. Claire was awarded the Jackie Hanbeck Award for outstanding work for people with disabilities. In retirement, Claire began to work as a consultant with the Community Resource Center to help them develop a new program to foster employment within the community for the mentally disabled. She became indispensable in that effort and lived to see the program achieve a successful beginning. She attended the First Baptist Church in Centralia where she sang in the choir and

volunteered at many church functions throughout the years. She was a long time registered trained adult leader with Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, and Venture Scouts, having received the highest recognition a volunteer can be awarded for outstanding service to Scouting, community, and church, The Silver Beaver Award. Claire also received other recognitions at the District Level of Scouting. Claire volunteered as a member of the Boy Scout Council Training Team for training adults to take youth onto High Adventure activities. She repeatedly worked as an adult leader in Boy Scouts taking youth on High Adventure activities and also was a valuable Venture Advisor escorting Co-ed Venture Scouts on High Adventure backpacking and canoeing treks. She worked tirelessly as Leader/ Advisor in scouting to help train youth patrols to build the skills required to organize and lead themselves. She strongly believed in the values of Scouting. Backpacking was her very favorite adventure with cycling a close second. She made the most of her time with her family and especially her mother-in-law, Helen Chapman whom she loved much. Per Claire's wishes, she will be cremated and a Memorial Celebration Party will be held in her honor in the early Spring. Tax deductible contributions may be made in Claire's name, addressed specifically to the Centralia Foundation/Felician Wellness Center and will be accepted at the Sutherland-Garnier Funeral Home in Centralia, IL. Claire volunteered in the program to advance the goals of the nutrition and fitness program there at the Centralia Recreation Center. Online condolences may be made to the family by visiting www.sutherlandfuneralhome.com

Tribute Wall



“ *It was my great privilege to know Claire back in our Junior College days in Danville. She was one of the most gentle, kind, and giving people I have ever known. Rest in peace dear one.*

January 21, 2015 at 12:00 AM



“ *Dearest Claire I will miss you. I am so glad God provided you with a loving husband, son and family. You were always the bright spot in the transition and IRA meetings. I just got a Christmas card from you the Saturday before you got your angel wings. Be free sweet Claire. Joe and John thank you for taking care of my friend.*

Vanessa Collier - January 09, 2015 at 12:00 AM



“ *I couldn't believe it when I heard. Claire is such a wonderful person. I will remember the times we shared and the impact she had in my scouting life fondly. Keeping you in my thoughts.*

John See - January 07, 2015 at 12:00 AM



“ *Claire will be a bright light and shining beacon for us all. she will be missed.*

John Straeter - January 06, 2015 at 12:00 AM

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“ I'll never forget Claire's infectious smile and mischievous laughter. Nor how she always met life head on and lived to the fullest. I was blessed to have her speak into my life during the years she was my supervisor. My deepest sympathy to John and Joe.

Carolann M - January 05, 2015 at 12:00 AM



“ John and Joe, I am deeply saddened to learn of Claire's passing. I was one of her STEP counselors out of the Belleville office, and always felt respect for Claire, and a deep connection with her. It seemed our lives had many parallels and connections. Claire will always be in my prayers and thoughts. Carol Sikora Hechenberger

[Contact Me](#)

January 05, 2015 at 12:00 AM



“ Godspeed, my dear high school friend. With love, Debora Pitlik.

January 05, 2015 at 12:00 AM