



Mary Lou Bates

October 17, 1937 - November 18, 2025

Mary Lou Bates, of Myrtle Beach, SC, passed away peacefully on Tuesday, November 18, 2025, at Embrace Hospice in South Carolina. Born in Elmira, NY, Mary Lou was the daughter of Thomas L. McDermott and Beatrice (Martin) McDermott.

She earned both her Bachelor's and Master's degrees from Elmira College and dedicated over 30 years of her career to the insurance industry.

Mary Lou enjoyed traveling with her husband and friends. Her journeys took her all over the world, from Asia, where she walked the Great Wall of China, to Africa, where she visited Egypt, and throughout many European countries. She also traveled extensively across the United States, visiting numerous national parks, including Denali in Alaska.

She will be remembered for maintaining a very active lifestyle throughout her entire life. Mary Lou was a devoted volunteer at Brookgreen Botanical Gardens in Murrells Inlet. Deeply committed to her faith, she was an active and cherished member of Socastee United Methodist Church, where she directed the bell choir for many years and was also a dedicated member of the choir.

Mary Lou was predeceased by her beloved husband, Harold Bates. She is survived by her brother, Thomas L. McDermott (Myrtle Beach, SC), her loving nephews and niece, David McDermott (Malta, NY), Kimberly Mankes (Merritt Island, FL) and Thomas S. McDermott (Horseheads, NY). She is also survived by many close friends of the church including Jan Terrell.

A service will be held on Saturday November 22, 2025 at 10:30 AM at the Socastee United Methodist Church 5575 Dick Pond Rd, Myrtle Beach, SC 29588. Please visit <https://www.goldfinchfuneralhome.com/> for online condolences.

Memorial contributions may be made to Socastee United Methodist Church. Mary Lou will be remembered for her strength, her passion for her faith, her active approach to life, and for never forgetting to honor her niece and nephews' birthdays. Her memory will live on in the hearts of all who knew and loved her.

Previous Events

Funeral Ceremony

NOV **22**. 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM (ET)

Socastee United Methodist Chu
5575 Dick Pond Rd
Myrtle Beach, SC 29588
(843) 650-3373

Tribute Wall

HV

“*Mary Lou Bates was a dedicated member of First Baptist Church of Elmira, New York. She sang in the Senior choir for years and was a very fine bell choir director. She was an amazing faithful servant of the Lord and she served him well. She was a good friend to all of us at First Baptist Church. We were delighted when she married Harry Bates. They eventually moved to South Carolina to retire and enjoy family down there. We missed her up here in Elmira but she was happy, spiritually fulfilled and a loving kind person. She and Harry were a wonderful couple! God rest her soul!! 🙏*”

Helen J Vincent - November 22, 2025 at 10:32 PM

TR

“*I was fortunate to volunteer with Mary Lou at Brookgreen Gardens for many years. She was an inspiration to me with her knowledge and desire to share it with our guests. I loved that she never let age discourage from doing anything. I will miss her. Tish Richter*”

tish Richter - November 19, 2025 at 07:36 PM