



Ruthann Howard

September 17, 1945 - September 9, 2015

Ruthann Oberly Howard of Georgetown, South Carolina, died at home Wednesday morning, September 9, 2015. She was the wife of Tommy Howard, retired editor of the Georgetown Times, Waccamaw Times, Inlet Outlook and South Strand News.

Born on September 17, 1945 in Easton, PA, she was the daughter of the late Paul Roy Oberly Sr. and Ruth Buss Oberly. She grew up in Hecktown, PA and Milford, NJ. She was active in Girl Scouts for years, church youth group, school and band.

She was a graduate of Delaware Valley Regional High School in Frenchtown, NJ. She earned a Bachelor of Arts in Education degree from the University of South Carolina in Columbia in 1967. She taught school at Brookland-Cayce Elementary School and at Cusseta, GA.

She retired in 2004 from Blue Cross- Blue Shield of South Carolina after a 31-year career. While there she worked as an internal auditor, in administration and in information systems/data processing. She was among the early women who worked in computer processing and was a systems analyst and programmer at the company's Surfside Beach office for 10 years.

Following her retirement, she and her husband moved to his native Georgetown. She ran for Georgetown County Auditor in 2004. Keenly interested in civic affairs she served on the board of the Georgetown County Republican Party and was a poll worker for the past decade. She also was a Realtor with the Georgetown Agency and other real estate companies since

her retirement.

A member of Precious Blood of Christ Catholic Church in Pawleys Island, Mrs. Howard was a member of the PBOC Catholic Women's Club, a past president of the Pee Dee Deanery for the South Carolina Council of Women (SCCCW) and served as secretary, board member and commission chairman for the area and state SCCCW for more than two decades.

A convert to Catholicism, Howard and her husband taught a Teen Time religious education program for two years at St. Peter Catholic Church in Columbia in the 1960s. She later was named Catholic Woman of the Year in 1993 for St. Joseph Church in Columbia and in 2003 for St. Michael Church in Murrells Inlet/Garden City Beach. She was also named woman of the year for the Pee Dee Deanery in 2003. Over nearly four decades, she sang in church choirs in Columbia at St. Joseph and St. John Neumann churches, St. Michael at Garden City Beach and St. Mary Our Lady of Ransom in Georgetown. She made her Cursillo weekend in June 2000. She and several other friends formed a prayer shawl ministry called the Knit Whits. The group was featured in an article in the Georgetown Times in May 2008.

She was active for many years in Pax Christi, a non-denominational group devoted to seeking peace in the world. She volunteered in many activities at churches wherever her family lived.

Howard was a member and board secretary for the Georgetown County Community Forum of the Palmetto Project, an interracial group promoting racial harmony. She supported her son and grandchildren and others in Scouting, church, community and sports activities. She was a supporter of other local groups such as The Village Group, the Swamp Fox Players and more.

A long-time member and volunteer for Birthright of Georgetown, she was also a member of Georgetown County Citizens for Life. She participated in many local and statewide pro-life Rally for Life observances of the Roe vs. Wade Supreme Court decision that allowed abortions. She joined other choir members in singing as part of the peaceful protest against that decision and in

favor of providing safe alternatives to abortion. She also participated in silent prayer vigils in several communities on Pro-Life Sundays.

As a volunteer for Birthright of Georgetown, she assisted women facing an unplanned pregnancy. The organization provides assistance for mothers and mothers-to-be with diapers, formula and other necessities and referrals to other helping agencies to help safeguard the unborn and newborn babies. Survivors include her husband of Georgetown; one son Thomas Howard Jr. (Niki) and three grandchildren, Sydni Thomas, Hayden Howard and Henley Howard; one brother, Paul Oberly Jr. (LaVera) of Country Club Hills, IL; sister-in-law Kathy Mammana Oberly of Columbia, SC; and a number of nieces and nephews; brothers-in-law Larry Howard Jr. (Jean) of Plum Boro, PA; John Howard Sr. (Frances) and James Howard (Carol Teal), both of Georgetown, and sister-in-law Claudia Howard of New Haven, KY.

She was preceded in death by her parents of Kutztown, PA; her brother David Oberly of Columbia, SC; and her parents-in-law, Larry and Claudia Howard of Georgetown, SC.

A memorial service and funeral Mass will be at 10 a.m. Monday, September 14, 2015 at Precious Blood of Christ Catholic Church, 1633 Waverly Road, Pawleys Island.

The family will receive friends and celebrate a Wake prayer service from 5 to 7 p.m. Sunday, September 13, 2015 at Goldfinch Funeral Home, Litchfield Chapel, 202 Hinnant Lane, Pawleys Island, SC.

In lieu of flowers and in recognition of Ruthann Howard's commitment to life, memorials are suggested to Birthright of Georgetown, 1905 Front St., Georgetown, SC 29440.

Online condolences may be left at www.goldfinchfuneralhome.com.

Goldfinch Funeral Home, Litchfield Chapel, is in charge of arrangements.

Tribute Wall

KO

“ *Ruthan, thank you for being a wonderful sister-in-law. A few months ago I told you that you always treated me more like a sister instead of a sister-in-law and you told me that I am family. Your family always treated me like family, I am thankful I married into the Oberly family. Thank you for never minding to make my gravy. I will remember you and I celebrating our birthdays together by having waffles and ice cream, I will miss you, my sweet sister-in-law.*

Kathy Oberly - September 19, 2015 at 11:06 AM

JG

“ *Aunt Ruthann, you will be so greatly missed...I love you so much and I am so glad I've got so many happy memories of time I have spent with you...having waffles and ice cream for yours and moms birthdays and so many more. I know you are looking out for us now and are no longer in pain and you are not suffering anymore. I could write so much about you and all of it would be very positive, I don't think I have ever seen you without a smile on your face. You were a great loving aunt and great aunt to Mason, he will miss you as well and is sad to see you leave but is glad you are not in pain anymore. Now you are with dad, Grandpa and Grandma and many others that have passed on before you. Uncle Tommy , Thomas, Niki and kids my heart aches for you and I am praying for strength to help you through this difficult time. I love you Aunt Ruthann , and until we meet again.*

Jennifer Grigg - September 15, 2015 at 09:22 AM

DF

“ So sad to hear of the passing of a former classmate, DeIVal Class of 1963. My deepest condolences to the Howard and Oberly families.

Diane Feldman

Diane Feldman - September 14, 2015 at 12:39 PM

KJ

“ I am so sorry...I just found out this a.m. a lovely lady that will be missed.

Kevin jayroe - September 14, 2015 at 07:16 AM



“ I am truly saddened that we have lost Ruthann after such a valiant and courageous fight. We touched some many people in so many ways whether through her volunteer work, commitment to her church or her work as a realtor. I had the pleasure of working with her for years where we formed a fast and long term friendship. She always had a smile on her face and a kind word. Her faith and her conviction in her beliefs was an inspiration to me and those who spent any time time with her. She will be terribly missed by me and by anyone who ever had the pleasure of being with her. She was a very special person.

*Much love to the family,
Brandy Davis*

Brandy Davis - September 14, 2015 at 07:08 AM

MS

“ *Melvin S. purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of Ruthann Howard.*



Melvin S. - September 12, 2015 at 03:11 PM

CB

“ *Ruthann was one of my lifetime favorite people. She was so helpful with systems issues when we were at Blue Cross Blue Shield In Surfside Beach. She was intelligent, patient, sensitive, professional and caring.*

Ruthann loved to laugh and appreciated a funny story better than almost anyone (June Kristopovich). She would remember punch lines years later, and all we would have to say is, "Now THAT's customer service" -- and we all would laugh.

She was a regular on my e-mail list, and though she lived in Georgetown and I'm in Myrtle Beach, I will miss her terribly. But I know God has welcomed Ruthann Oberly Howard and her beautiful soul, and she has no pain now. Good bye, Obs, and may you rest in peace.

Love,

*Chauncey Buchan
Former co-worker at BCBSSC (PGBA)*

Chauncey Buchan - September 12, 2015 at 12:39 PM



“ 6 files added to the album Ruthann Howard



Tommy Howard - September 12, 2015 at 02:29 AM



“ Larry, Jean and family purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Ruthann Howard.



Larry, Jean and family - September 11, 2015 at 06:08 PM



“ Kay Shelley lit a candle in memory of Ruthann Howard



Kay Shelley - September 11, 2015 at 06:05 PM



Randy and I send You and your Family our Deepest Condolences.

Kay Shelley - September 11, 2015 at 06:09 PM

BM

“ *Mr. Howard. i am so saddened to hear that Mrs.Howard has passed,she was a very kind and pleasant lady.you have my deepest sympathies.Billy Maybank.*

billy maybank - September 11, 2015 at 04:04 PM

KS

“ *Ken And Vicki Stringer lit a candle in memory of Ruthann Howard*



Ken and Vicki Stringer - September 11, 2015 at 03:03 PM

EB

“ *Dear Tommy and Thomas,*

I am so sorry to hear of Ruthann's passing. While I never had the privilege of meeting her, I know that she was the epitome of a very special wife and mother and the light of both of your lives as well as her grandchildren. Remember that death can take a loved one from us, but it can never, ever steal the memories that we have of her. Embrace those memories and the joyous times with her. I wish I were in Georgetown so I could be be you at this time, but please know that you have my prayers and thoughts. I do plan to travel to Georgetown in about two weeks and perhaps we can get together for a visit.

*Eddie Benton
Tampa, Florida*

Eddie Benton - September 11, 2015 at 09:30 AM

CG

*“ Oh how I loved this beautiful soul. She was my co-worker but most of all my friend. I truly loved her and so enjoyed our lunches together. I remember going with her to a republican debate and I watched her talk to everyone she met. I teased her and said, "Ruthann, if you gave a business card to everybody you have talked to just tonight you would have to order more". She just laughed and said, "I know but I forget". She taught me how to love & forgive and I will miss her so much. Rest in Peace my angel!
Carlene gauler*



Carlene Gauler - September 11, 2015 at 09:22 AM

DI

“ I am going to miss Aunt Ruthann so much!! I am blessed to have such a wonderful Aunt as she was. She is with her Savior now and in no pain so for that I am thankful. I love you Aunt Ruthann! I have a feeling Emily Ruth will be very much like you.

David Oberly, II - September 11, 2015 at 08:23 AM

PW

“ So sorry for your loss. I enjoyed working with Ruthann at BCBS. She was a great lady and very smart. She will be missed.

Patti Willis - September 11, 2015 at 06:04 AM

RF

“ Robin Feagin lit a candle in memory of Ruthann Howard



Robin Feagin - September 10, 2015 at 11:48 PM



“ *Sorry for your loss, Ruthann was a wonderful person! RIP Ruthann (Obz)!*



Mary Richardson - September 10, 2015 at 05:47 PM