



Helen Butler Nicholson

December 2, 1939 - June 14, 2024

Helen Butler Nicholson passed away peacefully into the arms of our Lord on June 14, 2024 at the age of 84. She was born to Sidney Olmstead and Fern Wheatley on December 2, 1939 in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Upon the heels of the Great Depression, the family moved to Mobile, Alabama. During times of strife, Helen and her sisters were sadly placed in an orphanage. In order to ensure they remained together, their Aunt Nettie Corinne Smith (Midge) and step father Lehman Smith adopted and eventually relocated them to San Antonio, Texas. Midge affectionately became known as "Mother." Throughout her childhood and teen years, times were hard and money was scarce. However, their "mother" worked hard selling shoes for Sears, making their clothes, and eating left-over meals to ensure all of their basic needs were met.

Helen attended Brackenridge High School from 1954-1958. She was popular, made friends easily, and became a member of the Purple Jackets. According to her very close friends, Helen would even argue with her teachers on occasion to prove a point if she believed them to be incorrect and usually came out on top. Following graduation, Helen married her high school sweetheart, Raschel Butler, in 1959. In 1960, she gave birth to her son, Jeffrey Raschel, and in 1962, her daughter Judith Michelle followed. Helen was a stay-at-home mom. She adored her children and lavished them with so

much love, and nurtured them in the most beautiful way imaginable. During their early school years, Helen became a PTA mom. She attended all school activities and enjoyed taking cookies and cakes to the classrooms for teachers and classmates to enjoy. When her children appeared in school plays and sang in the school choirs, she always beamed with pride and joy. Vice-versa, Jeff and Judy beamed with pride and joy when Helen would arrive because she was the most beautiful mother in the world, inside and out.

As Helen's children became older, she entered the workforce and filled positions for secretarial work. She was highly energetic, motivated, strong willed, and tenacious. Unable to obtain a college degree due to hard times, Helen became very driven and more than determined to achieve successes and dreams she set her mind upon. In the late 1960's, Helen began working as secretary to the Lease Negotiator and General Manager of Wonderland Mall. Gaining knowledge and experience, she diligently strived to prove herself capable of assuming a management role. It was shortly after she became Manager of Wonderland Mall and, later, partner of a successful commercial real estate company, JLN&A. She continued this role until her passing on June 14th.

Divorcing in the mid to late 1970's, Helen's desire to further succeed became even greater and she thrived off being busy. Following her departure from Wonderland Mall, and continuing as partner in JLN&A, she decided to embark on an additional career in the medical field which would span 1989-2002. It was during this time, she participated in the most tumultuous changes overtaking the medical field at the time. Her knowledge and experience through these years became vast. She served in various management/directorial positions which involved oversight of medical services provided to 30,000 HMO patients; management of a marketing and public/community relations physician referral program for approximately 900 physicians and services; directed contracting, marketing, and public relations

activities for a large x-ray company and pathology medical group; and negotiated medical contracts.

Her biggest dream was obtaining a higher education. While working full-time, she attended San Antonio College in continuing education programs, primarily management and administration and executive and professional development. In 1988, she conferred her BA degree in management (Cum Laude) from St. Mary's University. Still feeling unsatisfied and wanting more, she went on to obtain her MA degree in Health Care Management (Suma Cum Laude) from Our Lady of the Lake University in 1996.

In 2004, she married Jack Nicholson (the original), making their lives whole, until his passing in 2016. Helen and Jack worshipped each other and their love for one another was nothing less than pure and unconditional.

Throughout her life, Helen loved giving to the community and devoted a lifetime to helping and serving the needs of many throughout San Antonio. These included Area Director of Volunteers for the Annual HEB Feast of Sharing Holiday Christmas Dinner; UTHSC San Antonio Dental School Advisory Council (Member); United Way Saturdays of Caring Leadership Committee (Member); San Antonio Council of Presidents (Member); Project Mend (Board of Directors, Member/Parliamentarian); Dare to Love (Board of Directors, Member/Parliamentarian/Chairman); Junior Achievement of South Texas (Consultant); San Antonio Medical Managers (Member); Delta Sigma Pi, Lambda Upsilon Chapter (Life Member); Texas Women's Forum (Member); Turtle Creek Optimist Club (Member); American Association of University Women (Member); Women in Business (Founding Member/ Board of Directors/Vice President); Texas Hospital Association (Member); American Marketing Association (Member); Academy for Health Services Marketing (Member); Senior Community Services (Board of Directors/Treasurer); 1996

NBA Jam Session (Chairman of Volunteers for Contracted Social Agencies, San Antonio Sports Foundation and Child Abuse Prevention Services); Radiology Business Management Association (Member); Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce, Government Affairs Council (Member); Network Power Texas, Inc. (Founding Member/Board of Directors/Vice President); Mayor's Childcare Initiative Task Force (Chairman of Subcommittee which established the San Antonio Childcare Links, Inc.); Mayor's Commission on the Status of Women (Associate Commissioner for District 8/Commissioner for District 8, Chairman of Commission); Humana Women's & Children's Hospital (Board of Directors); MaxiCare, Health America (Vice Chairman); Good Health Plus (Secretary); CompCare (Consumer Advocate); Southwest Medical Plan (Board of Directors); American Pathology Foundation Member (Member); United Way (Allocations Committee Member); City of Balcones Heights (Master Plan Sub-committee, Planning & Zoning Committee [Secretary/Member]); Greater San Antonio Chapter, Alzheimer's Association (Board of Directors/Secretary/Advisory Board); Medical Group Management Association (Member); Bexar County Women's Center (Board of Directors/President/Advisory Council); Downtown Youth Drop-In Center (Board of Directors/Chairman); Child Abuse Prevention Services (formerly San Antonio Cares - Board of Directors/Secretary/Vice President of Development and Fundraising/President); Community Forum (Member); Selected 'Today's Women on the Go', San Antonio Express (1989); Selected Sunday's Woman, San Antonio Light (1988); Selected Outstanding Woman, St. Mary's University Women in Business (1986); Selected Woman of the Year, Women in Business (1983); Elected to the Inner Circle, Women in Business (1983).

"Mom, you broke the mold when God created you. He gave you inner beauty with a heart full of love, kindness, tenderness, and pure joy. Your inner beauty radiated outward and projected on everyone around you. Your physical beauty was undeniable. You were selfless, dedicated, and loyal. From the day of

mine and Jeff's births, you devoted your life to us selflessly, tirelessly, and endlessly. You supported us throughout our lives during times of happiness, trials, and tribulations. You were our best friend, mentor, and confidante. You have always been there for us. I am so honored and blessed to have been there for you and give back all you gave to us. Our hearts are broken but we will see you again soon. When I close my eyes at night, I will continue to hear and cherish the words you always said before retiring for the night.....'I love you, baby.' We love you forever and always."

Helen leaves behind many who truly loved her. She was genuine through and through. Her effervescence was infectious and she was an inspiration to many, which permeated everyone through and through.

She is predeceased by her adoptive parents Nettie Corinne Smith and Lehman Smith, husband Jack Nicholson, sister Colleen Wilder, and former husband Raschel Butler. Her survivors include daughter Judy Butler McBride (Pat), son Jeff Butler, grandson Justin Butler (Crystal), great grandchildren Kaydie, Kylie, and Kaleb; sisters Marjorie Woodard of Corpus Christi, and Martha Schimmel of Reno, NV; former daughter-in-law Kimberly Gilroy-Butler (Ramon), numerous nieces and nephews, and life-time best friends Barbara Nobis-Murphy, Elaine Neenan, Rollette Schreckenghost-Smith, Gaylene Compton, Patrick Sturdivant, close friend Angie Bella, and numerous other friends.

Pallbearers include: Jeff Butler, Justin Butler, Pat McBride, Patrick Sturdivant, Doug Aseron, Gene Sekula, Joe DeLaGarza, and Mark Davis.

Cemetery Details

Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery

1520 Harry Wurzbach Rd.
San Antonio, TX 78209

Previous Events

Funeral Service

JUL 9. 10:00 AM (CT)

Mission Park Funeral Chapels North Cherry Ridge
3401 Cherry Ridge Drive
San Antonio, TX 78230

Tribute Wall

TP

“ *Helen and I started the national chapter of CMSA. She and Jack were kind, thoughtful and great people. I will miss you both, especially our margaritas at Alamo Cafe. Love you, Terri Payne*



Terri L Payne - April 12, 2025 at 12:24 PM

MB

“ *Melissa Butts purchased the Simply Elegant Spat hiphyllum for the family of Helen Butler Nicholson.*



Melissa Butts - July 08, 2024 at 06:45 PM



“ *Magnificent Life Spray was purchased for the family of Helen Butler Nicholson.*



July 06, 2024 at 04:47 PM

LN

“ *Love Glen and Laura Neely purchased the Sweet Sincerity for the family of Helen Butler Nicholson.*



Love Glen and Laura Neely - July 05, 2024 at 04:16 PM

CB

“ Aunt Helen, where to begin. In my younger years I was always sneaking looks at you because of just how beautiful you were and it didn't matter if it was just as you got up in the morning or after spending days camping with us all in this Texas heat or coming in from a run which to this day never knew any other woman that looked great sweaty and no make up and that smile just genuine. My Aunt Helen had that natural beauty just like my cousin Judy. Natural beauties most definitely, but when I was young I never knew that it wasn't just being born with natural beauty but the beauty that came from within her heart combined with the natural that made Aunt Helen a show stopper from the minute she entered a room. I love you much and yes I will see ya on the other side. Such a self made and selfless person . You will I'm sure be wearing many crowns.

Cheryl Butler - July 02, 2024 at 11:57 PM

MS

“ Martha and Dave Schimmel purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Helen Butler Nicholson.



Martha and Dave Schimmel - July 02, 2024 at 09:38 PM

MS

“ Martha and Dave Schimmel planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Helen Butler Nicholson.

Martha and Dave Schimmel - July 02, 2024 at 09:38 PM

MS

“ Although I did not have the pleasure of knowing Helen in my youth, nor in the majority of my adult life, I will forever treasure the brief time that I was able to see the generous, gracious and loving woman who laid before me as I sat with my sister Marjorie. She would patiently accept what the nurses and doctors asked of her and smile. Judy was always right by her side and my heart was overwhelmed with the love they shared. one nurse in particular who was not assigned to her that day or night would take as many opportunities to look in on her as he could. They all feel absolutely in love with her. I too believe I will see her again someday, and Colleen who are both in the arms of Jesus.
Martha Roberts Schimmel.

martha schimmel - July 02, 2024 at 09:17 PM