

A Life Well Lived



UNTIL WE MEET AGAIN

*A beautiful life, so beautifully lived,
A heart that loved, a soul that gave.
Though your chair is empty, your love remains.
In every smile, every story, every name, your love remains.*

*Forever loved, never forgotten,
Your memory lives where tears cannot erase.
So this is not goodbye, dear Mother—
Just until we meet again, face to face.*

With gratitude for a life well lived, we remember

Mary Lee Buckner

MarLee/Pinky

11 September 1942 – 02 October 2026

Mary Lee “Marlee” “Pinky” Buckner

September 11, 1942 – October 2, 2026

Small in stature. Mighty in spirit. Boundless in love.

Some people leave footprints on this earth. Others leave pieces of themselves in the hearts of everyone they touch. Mary Lee Buckner was one of those extraordinary souls.

Born in the West End of Louisville, Kentucky, to Sterley Buckner Sr. and Willie Roberta Buckner, Mary was a fierce little family warrior from the beginning. Though small in stature, she possessed a mighty spirit, often rushing to defend her siblings before they even knew they needed protecting. She attended James Bond Elementary, Madison Junior High, and graduated from Fern Creek High School.

Affectionately known as “Marlee” and “Pinky,” Mary lived a life filled with laughter, adventure, and love. Her nickname “Pinky” may have come from her favorite color or from the little finger she raised while trying to disguise a childhood habit of sucking her thumb. Either way, it became part of the unforgettable woman everyone loved.

Mary never met a stranger—only friends she hadn't gotten to know yet. Her lifelong friendship with Dixie Cochran began with two exhausted young mothers debating whose newborn cried the most. Their hilarious attempt to settle the argument ended when neither baby cried, but a beautiful friendship was born. Years later, a simple conversation aboard a Greyhound bus became another friendship that lasted for decades. That was Mary: when she made a friend, she became a friend.

She loved bowling, bingo, card games, music, dancing, and being surrounded by people. Her home was filled with laughter, life lessons, and sometimes the unforgettable results of her newfound devotion to microwave cooking!

But Mary's greatest earthly joy was her family. Known lovingly as ***“Mamma Bear,”** she fiercely protected her children, taught them resilience, encouraged them to love themselves and others, and reminded them that falling down was never a reason to stop trying. Her motherly love extended far beyond her own children. Countless nieces, nephews, friends, and young people found in her a second mother, a trusted adviser, and a welcoming home.

Mary also found fulfillment in helping older adults through her volunteer work with Senior Helpers and Eldercare.

Above all, Mary loved Jehovah God. After years of searching for spiritual fulfillment, she began studying the Bible with Caroline Price in 1983, was baptized as one of Jehovah's Witnesses in 1984, and began her lifelong Pioneer ministry in 1985.

For more than four decades, she joyfully shared the good news of God's Kingdom, participated in preaching campaigns and Kingdom Hall projects, and helped others come to know Jehovah. Among her greatest spiritual joys were seeing her son dedicate his life to Jehovah in 2011 and attending an international convention of Jehovah's Witnesses in Germany. Her faith remained steadfast until the end, and she cherished the resurrection promise found at **John 5:28, 29**.

On October 2, 2026, at 7:17 p.m., Mary completed her earthly journey at the age of 84.

She was preceded in death by her parents; her children, Sheri Yvette Trice Grundy and Sterle Lynn Trice; and her siblings Eugene Smith, Sterley Buckner Jr., Leonard Buckner, Richard Buckner, Mattie Buckner Hart, Georgia Buckner Eugene, and David Buckner.

She leaves to cherish her memory her sons, Richard Trice III (Stephanie) and Leonar Lamont Trice Sr. (Monique); her sisters, Barbara Buckner King and Pearl Gillespie-Gray; her beloved grandchildren, great-grandchildren, great-great-grandchild; and a host of nieces, nephews, spiritual brothers and sisters, lifelong friends, and countless others who affectionately called her family.

Mary's legacy cannot be measured by years, possessions, or accomplishments alone. It lives in every person she encouraged, every child she nurtured, every stranger she befriended, and every heart she filled with love.

We will miss her laughter, her stories, her fierce protection, and the simple joy of being in her presence. We will miss the mother who was also our teacher, our protector, our greatest cheerleader, and our friend.

But we will hold tightly to the hope she treasured—that death need not be the end, and that one day, through Jehovah's promise of the resurrection, we may embrace her again.

Until then, rest peacefully, Mamma Bear.

Your voice may be silent, but your lessons still speak. Your arms may no longer hold us, but your love never lets us go.

Forever loved. Never forgotten. Until we meet again.

Preceded in death by parents, Sterley Buckner Sr. and Willie Roberta Buckner, and siblings Eugene Smith, Sterley Buckner Jr., Leonard Buckner, Richard Buckner, Mattie Hart, Georgia Eugene, David Buckner, William Edward Buckner, Children: Sheri Grundy (daughter), Sterle Lynn Trice (son), Darius Scott (grandson)

Survived by Sisters: Barabara King, Pearl Gillespie-Gray
Children: Richard Trice III (Queen: Stephanie), Leonar Lamont Trice (Queen: Monique)
Grandchildren: Deder Williams, Victoria Willis, Jazmine Trice, Jason Thomas, David Williams, Valita Jones, William Jones, Leeann Wade, Darryl Graham, Curtis Dennis, Tyanna Colbert, Leonar Lamont Trice Jr., and Arissa (Cliff) Tatum;
Great-grandchildren: Jasmine Bell, David Williams, Deder Williams, Kaden Williams, Dominique Wade, Jaylen Jones, Alyssa Willis, and Aliyah Willis, Oceana Jones, Unique Jones, Davonna (Kealeah) Jones, Victor (Kaden) Jones, Aaliyah Colbert, Anthony (AJ) Colbert, Angel Colbert, Emory Trice, and Nazjhir Trice, Amorah Dennis
Great-great-grandchildren: Jassiebella Jones, Key’Zavion Jones, Na’Zarielle Jones, Brielle Jones, Saylem Porter, Ryder Williams, Xavier Jones
And a small nation of nieces, nephews, friends, and family.

Memorial Services of Mary Lee Buckner

October 17th, 2026, 2 PM EST
Huntington Park—Christian Congregation of Jehovah’s Witnesses Kingdom Hall
5301 Garden Green Way
Louisville, KY 40218-4117
(502) 968-4917

In Mary Lee's honor, the family encourages friends to spend time with loved ones, share a meal, or help someone in need.

The family of Mary Buckner gratefully thanks relatives, friends, and neighbors for their prayers, visits, meals, support, and all acts of kindness extended to them during this time of bereavement.

Until we meet again.