



*Nancy Jane Craven
Madison*

Nov. 3, 1934 - May 30, 2026

Nancy Jane Craven Madison died peacefully May 30, 2026 in Morganton, North Carolina. She was 91.

Nancy enjoyed a 70-year love affair with James Thomas Madison, Sr. who survives her. Nancy met Jim at Appalachian State College when Jim spied her, the most beautiful woman he would ever see, sitting at the cool kids' table in the college bookstore in 1955. Nancy had a large pack of friends at Appalachian she kept up with her whole life long. Competition for Nancy's attention was fierce, but Jim prevailed. They were married September 14, 1958 and lived a loving relationship that was the envy of all who have known them.

Nancy was born November 3, 1934, in North Wilkesboro, in Wilkes County, North Carolina, to William Atlee Craven and Mamie Lorena Hays Craven. She grew up in Asheboro, in Randolph County, North Carolina. A straight-A student over her whole education, she graduated from Asheboro Senior High School in 1953 and from Appalachian in 1957, with a degree in Elementary Education. She went on to change the lives of thousands of students in Asheboro, NC, Silver Springs, MD, Statesville, NC, Dillon, SC, Charleston, SC, and Morganton, NC, over a span of 40 years.

She never raised her voice in her classroom: misbehavior was simply not an option.

She was teacher, mentor, guidance counsellor, mother, and social worker for her students, many of whom credit her as the best teacher they ever had, the teacher who changed the trajectory of their lives. She was the champion of her students most at risk. She could shut down bullies in an instant. A walk around town in Morganton would frequently see a student from years before giving her a hug and telling her of their accomplishments which they assured her were due to her treating them as special when no one else did.

Nancy had a thick group of friends, from high school, to college, to the Gay Blades Garden Club in Statesville, to the Dancing Girls in Morganton. She held court wherever she went.

Nancy was the coolest mom ever! For her three boys, Charlie, Sam, and Jamie, she planned lavish birthday parties, made Halloween costumes, and scored a 100 in every final exam of Motherhood 101: Christmas! She found the perfect gifts, made the perfect cookies, candy, and fudge. For her boys, childhood was magical!

Nancy made the better half of the perfect team with Jim. Through all their travels, Nancy made the most exquisite campsites. She had a talent for remaining spotless, even walking through mud in pristine white sneakers. She and Jim backpacked together in the North Carolina mountains. After their retirement, they spent 20 years traveling the American West, spending months in Borrego Springs, California and Ajo, Arizona, collecting friends along the way, leaving each place cleaner and brighter than before.

Nancy will be dearly missed by all. She is survived by her husband, James Thomas Madison, Sr.; son Charles Atlee Madison and his partner Joshua Benjamin Hinkle in Miami Beach, FL, Charlie's children, William Wright Madison and their partner Rin Ferraro, in Norman, OK and Conroe, TX; and Anna Hays Madison and her fiancé Curtis Murphy Haynes Mann in Lake George, NY; son Samuel Joshua Madison and his wife, Ashley Browning Madison, in Raleigh, NC, and his daughter Lucinda Pei Wen Madison in Mt. Pleasant, SC; and son James Thomas Madison, Jr. in Morganton.

Services are pending and will be announced once complete.

In lieu of flowers, please donate to Burke Education Foundation, Inc., in Memory of

Nancy Jane Craven Madison, PO Box 972, Morganton, NC, 28680, the best way to honor Nancy's legacy.

Sossoman Funeral Home and Crematory Center is assisting the family with the arrangements.

Tribute Wall

No tributes added yet.