Sossoman
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# Shirley Hollifield Sparks

**Nov. 16, 1946 - Aug. 3, 2018**

Shirley Hollifield Sparks, 71, of Morganton passed away Friday, August 3, 2018. Born in Detroit, Michigan on November 16, 1946, she was the daughter of the late Yates T. Hollifield and Ruth Ledford Hollifield. She was a member of First Baptist Church in Mooresville, NC.

Shirley contracted Polio in 1948 while living in Spruce Pine. However, this did not prevent her from graduating Harris High School and continuing on to earn her nursing degree from Baptist Hospital School of Nursing. After graduating she worked in pediatrics at Presbyterian Hospital in Charlotte. She later worked for Mecklenburg County Social Services.

When Shirley became pregnant, she looked for better methods than she had often seen in practice. She found them in natural childbirth and breastfeeding. She used those methods for her next two sons and became an instructor in those methods. When the family moved back to Spruce Pine, she became involved in teaching EMTs in Avery County through Mayland Tech.

As her sons grew older, she devoted much of her time and energy to their pursuits. This included driving them to swim practice and meets, serving as PTA president, serving on the board of the Shelby Aquatics Club, as well as providing transport and

support for football and basketball.

After mid-life she was afflicted by the slow onset of Post-Polio Syndrome but was still able to be active in church, the soup kitchen, and the Mooresville Christian Women's Club.  She formed hard and fast friends who loved her dearly, and she felt the same towards them.

After moving to Morganton, she was increasingly inactive but loved her books; most of all she delighted in her grandchildren.  She leaves them with her love and strength.

Shirley is survived by her husband, Larry Sparks of the home; sons, Devin Sparks of Washington, D.C., Josh Sparks (Kelly) of Asheville, and Andrew Sparks (Julie) of Cornelius, NC; grandchildren, Marley and Maya Sparks of Asheville; a brother, Buddy Wade Hollifield of Burnsville; and a sister, Kay Hollifield Oke of Spruce Pine.

The family will receive friends from 2 to 3 p.m., Tuesday, August 7, 2018 at Sossoman Funeral Home and Crematory Center.  The memorial service will follow at 3 p.m. in the Colonial Chapel of the funeral home.

Memorial contributions may be made to the American Cancer Society, 4-A Oak Branch Drive, Greensboro, NC 27407.

# Tribute Wall



Thinking of you across the veil. What a beautiful life you lived! I remember wonderful spend-the-nights with you and your family. Love, Pat Blevins Webster

—Pat Blevins Webster