



Martha Jane Boring Kittleman

November 13, 2023

Martha Jane Boring Kittleman, 94, passed away at her home in McAllen, Texas, on November 12, 2023.

Jane was born in Greenwood, Mississippi, on January 13, 1929, to Thomas Chester Boring and Martha Jane Barber Boring. She had one brother, Dr. Thomas Chester Boring, Jr.

It was on the banks of the Yazoo River where she played on the wonderful flood plain and went bass fishing with her father that she first fell in love with the outdoors.

Jane attended school in Greenwood, and upon graduation from high school, she attended college at the University of Mississippi in Oxford. She was a member of the Chi Omega sorority. After graduation, she taught Home Economics and Science at a high school in Jackson, Mississippi. She then returned to Greenwood to teach elementary school. She met Charles Wesley Kittleman, Jr., and after their third date, during which he hit three golf balls out of bounds, he proposed on the spot; they were engaged and married in September 1951. Two of their sons, Charles Wesley, III, and William Thomas Kittleman were born in Mississippi.

In 1957, the family moved to Dallas. They had their third son, John Wesley Kittleman, and Jane took a job teaching elementary school at the Greenhill School in Dallas. Jane became interested in teaching children with learning disabilities and was certified in language training. She continued her teaching career in early elementary education through 1983 when she and Wes retired

and moved to the Rio Grande Valley. During her time in Dallas, Jane became even more passionate about nature and specifically bird watching after attending a tour sponsored by the Audubon Society.

At a young age, Jane developed a strong interest in nature, and that love of nature remained with her during her entire life. In 2004, Jane was honored as McAllen Woman of the Year. Articles of praise acknowledged that her love of the Rio Grande Valley had ingrained in those who knew her a strong desire to preserve and protect the habitat of the Rio Grande Valley and its wildlife population.

Over the years, Jane raised awareness of the natural treasures of the Rio Grande Valley including birds, mammals, reptiles, and butterfly populations. Jane emphasized that the Valley offered more varieties of wildlife than any other area in the United States and worked closely with the McAllen Chamber of Commerce to promote eco-tourism through nature festivals and by raising support and awareness of the local venues in which wildlife could be observed and enjoyed. Her interest in ecology contributed to the success of the Valley Land Fund. Jane also served on the Board at Quinta Mazatlán as a charter member and was instrumental in negotiating the purchase of the land and the facility by the City of McAllen. She continued to guide the mission of Quinta until her final days and was very proud of the countless children and adults of the Rio Grande Valley who would come to experience the natural treasures here through this special facility.

To many individuals in the Rio Grande Valley, Jane is known as “The Mother of Birding”. During her time in the field, she sighted 738 out of a possible 800 different species of birds in North America. She was also a planner, organizer, volunteer, recruiter, lecturer, and tour guide for McAllen’s Texas Tropics Nature Festival. Jane was an active member of First United Methodist Church McAllen for forty years, and as part of her service to her church community, she would take fellow members on tours throughout the Valley. In addition, Jane and Wes spent many years traveling across the United States to observe various wonders of nature. She backpacked the Grand Canyon,

cycled through Scotland, climbed all but two of the highest mountains in the lower continental U.S, and was part of the first all-female group to canoe the Yukon River in Alaska. She also traveled to central Mexico to the location where the monarch butterflies overwinter during their migration cycle.

In her later years, Jane enjoyed converting the plants in her home to natives, and she spent countless hours playing Mahjong with her friends and keeping up with her grandchildren and their activities to the last detail.

Jane is preceded in death by her husband, her parents, her brother and her daughter-in-law, Patsy Ramirez Kittleman. She is survived by her sons Charles Wesley Kittleman, III, William Thomas Kittleman (Linda), and John Wesley Kittleman (Julie) along with twelve grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. Jane had several caretakers who tended to her during the last years, and the family would like to thank Sandra Montes and Eni Delgado for their dedication. A private celebration will be held on Saturday, December 9, 2023, in her home garden followed by a reception from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. that the public is invited to attend. The family suggests memorial donations may be made to Quinta Mazatlán or to the McAllen First United Methodist Church Building Fund. Arrangements are by Kreidler Funeral home.

Tribute Wall

DA

“ Mrs. Kittleman was my 2nd grade teacher at Greenhill maybe 57 years ago? I was just thinking about her and remembering that there was a boy in the class who was drawn to me and would sort of corner me and hug me all the time. As a little girl I found this unwanted attention overwhelming and oppressive, for some reason. And I told Mrs. Kittleman that I didn't like it. Many teachers might have found the whole situation cute, and thought that I was overreacting and told me it wasn't a big deal and Michael just liked me and I should just hug him back. But Mrs. Kittleman saw my extreme discomfort, and affirmed my bodily autonomy and my right to determine who could touch me, and who couldn't. She told Michael to keep his hands to himself. And he did from that point on, much to my relief. A simple lesson. But one that had a profound impact on this little girl. And Michael, I dare say! And for Texas in the late 60's, much less now, it was extraordinary. Mrs. Kittleman taught me that i had control of what happened to my body, and no one could take that away from me. I'll be eternally grateful to her for that. She was an excellent teacher who touched the lives of all those in her care in simple, yet profound, ways. Many blessings to her and he family! Dawn Atkinson Prestwich

Dawn - February 16, 2025 at 08:18 AM

JU

“ Yesterday, I found out about Mrs. Kittleman's passing. I was fortunate to know her in several capacities over several decades: my teacher in a high school child development class, as a feminist and outdoorswoman, and mother of a long-time childhood friend (Tommy). Recently, as a retired Pediatrician, I wanted to reach out to her and thank her for what her teaching meant to me. I'm saddened to hear of her death and that I wasn't able to share these thoughts with her:

Mrs Kittleman's child development class ignited in me the notion that working with children, understanding and playing a role in patients' growth and development was something for which I was well-suited. Years later, I chose a career that involved understanding and influencing the growth and development of kids. I can only imagine how many others' lives were similarly inspired by her.

Jimmy Unger - January 20, 2024 at 12:10 PM

JF

“ I had her for child development and loved every moment of her class. She was an amazing teacher-so kind and so good at what she did. She turned me on to being a teacher. She will be missed.
Jennifer Franz-Melady

jennifer Franz-Melady - November 16, 2023 at 04:25 PM