



Melva Harmon

December 23, 1947 - July 3, 2019

Melva Jane Harmon, age 71, a noted Little Rock union lawyer, passed away on July 3, 2019. Melva was born in Terrell, Texas, on December 23, 1947 and was preceded in death by her parents, Hillard Malvern and Emma Josephine (Carper) Harmon and brother, G.P. Harmon, and brother-in-law, Leo Donahue.

Melva was educated in the Terrell, Texas public schools and received her undergraduate degree from Stephen F. Austin State University in 1970 and then her law degree from the University of Texas in 1976. She was a VISTA volunteer right out of college, working in Harrison and Little Rock, and was one of the founding organizers for the then-fledgling ACORN community organization, notably leading the infamous anti-blockbusting campaign in the Oak Forest neighborhood. After law school, she returned to Little Rock and began a long and distinguished career as a union and “people’s” lawyer, representing Teamsters Local 878 and other unions, as well as countless individuals in every type of employment dispute, for over 40 years. Melva was selected as a fellow of The College of Labor and Employment Lawyers, which honors the leading lawyers nationwide in the practice of Labor and Employment Law, and was named in The Best Lawyers in America for over 20 years. In her later career, Melva was also a mediator and arbitrator and was active in service to both the American and Arkansas Bar Associations.

A tireless advocate for her clients, Melva had the soft voice of a youngster but

the heart and strength of a warrior. She was a true advocate for working people. No client of Melva ever doubted the zeal or ability of their lawyer. What's more, she persevered and excelled in a male-dominated legal world, proven by an anecdote detailed in a 2018 Super Lawyers magazine feature article: early in her career, when representing a woman in a settlement hearing, a judge asked Melva's client if she was well represented, since her lawyer "was only a woman." This, and many other occasions of "preconceived notions", formed the foundation of Melva's tireless crusade to successfully litigate for each of her clients' justice.

Despite having to fight constantly for her clients in tough legal environments, Melva was an eternal optimist. An avid cat lover, an art lover, an accomplished gardener, and a kickboxer, Melva was a woman of many talents and broad knowledge. When not in the courtroom, she loved to travel all over her beloved adopted state of Arkansas where the natural beauty of the trees, rivers, and landscape captivated her. Melva also loved estate sales where she could look at the treasures of others' lives and reading books covering a variety of subjects that captured her interest. She cared deeply about others and was active in community organizations, including the Twentieth Century Club and the Wolfe Street Foundation. Melva wanted to make a difference in the world, and she did. Where ever her heart led her, whether the courtroom, counseling room, outdoors, or friend's and family's homes, Melva made a deep and impactful difference in every life she touched.

Those left to cherish her memory and her incredible legacy are her sisters, Barbara Donahue and Nell Scarborough and husband, Don, all of Terrell, sisters-in-law: Sarah Harmon and Susan Mitchell, both of McKinney, TX; nieces and nephews: Jimmy, David, Bryan, Rick, Suzy and Amy; great-nieces: Presley and Abigail as well as several other extended family members, friends and colleagues that will miss her greatly.

A memorial service for Melva Harmon will be at 7:00 p.m. on Friday, July 19,

2019 at Max Slayton Funeral Chapel. Her family will receive friends from 5:00 p.m. to service time at the funeral home.

In lieu of flowers and in honor of Melva's heart for others and animals, donations are requested by the family to be made to: Twentieth Century Club, 4011 Maryland Ave., Little Rock, AR, 72204, <https://www.hopeawayfromhome.org/memorials-honorariums/> or to Little Rock Humane Society, 14600 Colonel Glenn, Little Rock, AR, 72210, <https://warmhearts.org/>.

Previous Events

Gathering

JUL 19. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Max Slayton Funeral Chapel
642 N. Rockwall Ave.
Terrell, TX 75160

Memorial Service

JUL 19. 7:00 PM (CT)

Max Slayton Funeral Chapel
642 N. Rockwall Ave.
Terrell, TX 75160

Tribute Wall



“ *Melva Harmon*

October 08, 2023 at 07:43 PM



“ *Nell, so sorry to learn about your sister. I will be praying for your family.*

Sharon Rush Collins

Sharon Rush Collins - August 04, 2019 at 06:52 PM

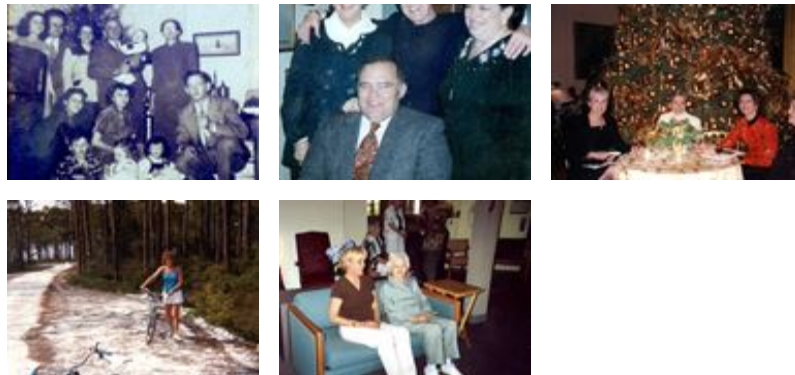


“ *Melva and I have been friends for 30 years....I can't believe she no longer graces this earth. I will miss her laughter, going to lunch together At Trios and long talks about the cats, possible house projects, working in the yard, and life in general. I love you Melva and my heart is broken.....I miss you so much!!*

Leslie Tucker Durbin - July 21, 2019 at 11:33 AM



“ 22 files added to the album *Life Tributes*



Max Slayton Funerals & Cremations - July 19, 2019 at 09:56 AM

JW

“ *Melva and I took kickboxing together for a few years. She was one of the kindest most welcoming people I have ever known. I will miss seeing her beautiful smile and having her run circles around me at the gym.*

She was an inspiration to me any many more.

Jackie Wilkinson - July 19, 2019 at 09:14 AM

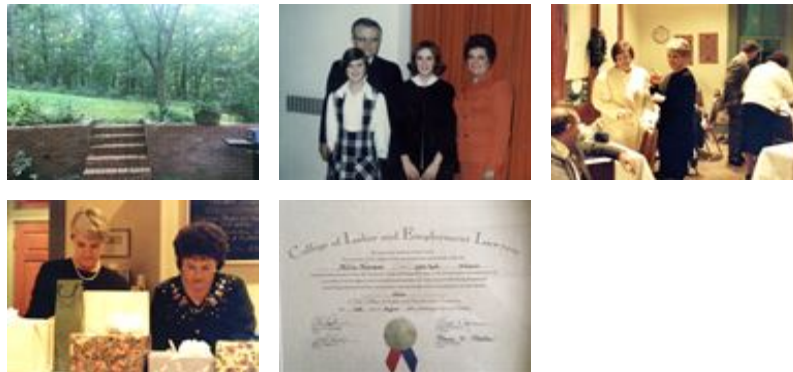
DF

“ *I have done a lot of carpenter and cabinet work over the years on Melvas kitchen and other home projects. It was always a good visit everytime we had to meet. The projects all turned out Great and she would be happy til she came up with a new project. I think she was very proud of kitchen remodel we just finished. Considered Melva a good friend and gonna miss not having a new project to talk about and catching up on what has been going on in our lifes. Donnie Ammons*

Donnie Ammons (contractor & friend) - July 19, 2019 at 12:10 AM



“ *68 files added to the album Life Tributes*



Max Slayton Funerals & Cremations - July 18, 2019 at 01:57 PM

SM

“ *Melva and I go way back to VISTA and ACORN in Arkansas. Great time in history and for us. I moved, Melva went to Law School. Years later we reconnected and a long term friendship developed. I'm going to miss my very special friend and sister. The community is going to miss a wonderful woman who worked hard for their rights. Melva will always be with us in spirit and in our hearts. Suzie Marquess*

Suzie Marquess - July 18, 2019 at 11:07 AM

MC

“ *Melva was a great attorney with a big heart for working families. I was proud to call her my friend. Melba Collins-Brehm, Retired AFL-CIO Representative.*

Melba Collins-Brehm - July 13, 2019 at 11:11 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Melva Harmon.*



July 13, 2019 at 07:04 PM

JC

“ *Remembering Melva as rather quite back in the days when our mothers rode to work together. She was a great person. Sorry for your loss Barbara, Nell, and also to your family's.*

Jeanne Sue Carnes Carr - July 13, 2019 at 06:19 PM

SB

“ So sorry to hear about my classmate and sweet friend. I will always remember Melba always so sweet and extremely smart. My thoughts and prayers go out especially to her 2 sweet sisters Nell and Barbara and to her family. She will greatly be missed. RIP my sweet friend

Sharon Boyd - July 12, 2019 at 11:43 AM

BM

“ One of my closest friends growing up, we had so much fun doing everything together. RIP in Melva my dear friend.

Betty Jo McMahan-Wilson - July 12, 2019 at 11:34 AM

RT

“ May the stars carry your sadness away, May the flowers fill your heart with beauty, Gently may friends ease your pain, Softly may peace replace your heartache and may warmest memories always remain.

We will miss Melva. Please accept our sympathy. Our thoughts are with you and your family,

Sandy and Rick Traylor

Rick and Sandy Traylor - July 12, 2019 at 09:12 AM