



## Claire Donovan

July 26, 2014

Claire E. Donovan Obituary Claire E. Donovan passed on July 13, 2014 following a year long struggle with cancer. She is free again, soaring again and watching over everyone she loved again. Claire was born a Texan in Corpus Christi, she was always first a Texan but she embraced the entire world, cherished the diversity of people, places and times. There was little to learn and experience that did not capture Claire's imagination, if not her heart. Her formative years were spent in Bryan, where as a 17 year old she once had dinner with Elvis Presley. Claire's fondest childhood memories were soaring over the landscapes of Texas with her father in his crop duster- prompting her desire to wing walk and sky dive. Claire worked all of her adult life. Her early professional years included roles in modeling, administrative support in the Texas Legislature and positions in journalism, including the "The Item" in Huntsville. During these years, she followed one her lifelong callings- the civil rights movement of the sixties. There was rarely an event in Texas in support of civil rights that she did not actively participate in. She marched in Mississippi and Alabama with Martin Luther King. It was fitting that she later was awarded the inaugural Martin Luther King Award at the University of Texas Medical Branch. In the 70's, Claire arrived at the University of Texas Medical Branch and quickly caught the eye of top administrators eventually leading to a 20 year career as an administrative official in the School of Medicine. She worked for four different Deans of Medicine and supported the efforts of scores of departmental Chairman, and many faculty

and staff members who sought her advice or who were referred to her. Upon her retirement in 2000, Claire was honored by the Deans, Chairmen, faculty and staff of the School with the establishment of the Claire Donovan Medical Education Scholarship Fund. The Fund continues to grow each year and supports a School of Medicine graduate who shows the compassion, empathy, and spark necessary to succeed in a primary care residency program and career. During this same time period, Claire was instrumental in the emerging development of the Texas Brain Injury Foundation. She worked tirelessly to preserve the "The HRA Village" in Galveston County. The village served not only as an assisted living home for the brain injured but also the mentally challenged. Her efforts along with those of a special colleague, Mike Johnson, have preserved the village which continues to prosper as "The Independence Village" today. Her work and that of many others provided a wonderful home for her son, Mike Searcy, who was head injured in 1981 while on duty serving our country in the United States Coast Guard. Claire's continuing passion in life was people. She sought and embraced a rainbow of friends from every walk of life, every profession including the arts, the sciences and the trades. Her friendships were ageless as was she-the young, the old and those in between. Babies and young children always captured her heart. Claire loved creative, imaginative and humorous individuals and cherished those who approached life honestly and with passion and tolerance for all. The greatest gift she provided was her desire and ability to network these friends, enriching all along the way. Claire's love of family and the well-being and success of each member was always paramount in her mind. As with her friends, she networked everyone providing her husband, children and grandchildren with touchstones that constantly enriched their lives. She taught her family to love completely, even when there was less than complete understanding-a gift that will sustain her family during this time and in the years that follow. Claire is now on her way, free again to continue another of her lifelong interests and joys- travel. During retirement, she visited Italy, Greece, Russia, France, Turkey, Israel, Egypt, and Canada. She so loved

New York City and traveled there with family and friends. She traveled extensively with her husband, Harvey. They loved the west including Yellowstone, the Tetons, the Snake River, Monument Valley and many other venues. Claire loved cowboys- their boots, their buckles, their jeans, their spurs and their hats. Claire and Harvey's Alaskan cruise was a highlight for both of them. Claire was preceded in death by her father and mother, Richard and Nan Cardwell, her brother Ashford Manning and her sister, Mary Nan Hayes. Claire is survived by her husband, Dr. Harvey Bunce III, her sister-in-law Maxine Manning, her sons Mike Searcy, Flynn Donovan and significant other Sammie Camp, and Christopher (Cutty) Donovan. Claire is also survived by her "gift" children Jessica Holt and husband Todd Holt and Beau Bunce and wife Meagan Bunce. Also surviving are her grandchildren Dustin Searcy and wife Laura Searcy, Beth Ann Searcy, Liam Donovan, and Jackson Holt. Claire is also survived by three great grandchildren, Cortlynn, Carleigh and Cooper Searcy, numerous nieces, nephews, cousins and countless friends. Claire so loved the fall in the northeast. Look for her presence there in a few months. A "Celebration of Life" will be held at 2 pm, July 26th, 2014 at The Sam Houston Funeral Home, 1700 Normal Park Drive, Huntsville, Texas. Memorials may be made to the Claire Donovan Medical Education Scholarship Fund and can be addressed to the: UTMB Development Office, 301 University Blvd, 3.110 Administration Building, Galveston, TX 77555-0148. Memorial condolences may be made to the family online at [www.shmfh.com](http://www.shmfh.com).

# Tribute Wall



“ *Claire Donovan*

November 15, 2022 at 08:33 PM



“ *I am so very sorry to hear about the loss of Claire. She was such an inspiration to me and was one of the most fun ladies I have ever met! She will be missed by many who loved her dearly. I will be praying and thinking about Harvey and her entire family during this sad time.*

**Holly Hitt Niner** - August 27, 2014 at 08:41 PM



“ *God bless her! I am so glad to have known her! We had some very interesting conversations! I made her teeth sparkle every 6 months!*

**Debbie Wingo** - July 30, 2014 at 08:56 PM



“ *"If we have been pleased with life, we should not be disappointed with death, since it comes from the hand of the same Master." - Michel Angelo*  
*Well done Claire! Your life pleased the Master and pleased/inspired/helped countless others. Be pleased!*  
*In Sympathy and In Prayer...*

**Dessie Cherry** - July 25, 2014 at 12:23 PM

KA

“ *Patty and I were saddened by Claire's passing and send our condolences to Harvey and other family. She was a fun and caring person, and when we met her we always wanted to spend more time with her and know her better. Enjoyed talking with her about politics! She is greatly missed.*

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**Karl & Patty Anderson** - July 24, 2014 at 06:25 PM

DC

“ *Clair's passing leaves a huge hole - in our hearts, our memories and in the universe. She was a powerful force. I met with her very early in my career in health care administration, and her sage advice stays with me to this day. Many wonderful memories, both from work and play. My love to Harvey and all the family. I can't attend the memorial service, but my thoughts and prayers will be with you all.*

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**Debby Chambers** - July 23, 2014 at 06:15 PM

EM

“ *My sympathy to Claire's family on her passing. I did not know her well, but knew of her. I knew Harvey and his family years ago. I do believe Claire helped me get job interviews at UTMB. Her obituary was beautifully written and described the life of a remarkable woman. I wish I had known her better.*

*May she rest in peace.*

*Evelyn Markides*

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**Evelyn Markide** - July 23, 2014 at 08:26 AM

DS

“ Harvey and family,

*My most sincere condolences and sympathy to all of you. Claire and I worked together for many years in the President and Dean's office. She was simply "the best". We shared many laughs about politics and life. It was truly a blessing to have been a friend of Claire's*

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**Don Stevens** - July 22, 2014 at 11:33 AM

SC

“ Claire was an amazing person who had a positive impact on all those lucky enough to know her. I don't think I ever saw her without a smile on her face. She made all those around her feel welcome and comfortable. I went to her countless times for both professional and personal advice. She always had time for me. Claire, You're friendship was a true blessing that I will always cherish. Harvey, my friend, please know that you and your family are in our thoughts and prayers.

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**Steve Conner** - July 21, 2014 at 02:51 PM

FG

“ I want to wish the family my sincerest condolences, I remember her assisting my manager with our office's growth and sustainment of the International Affairs office in the early 90's.

*My prayers are with you all during this time, peace be with you.*

*Take care Dr. Bunce and family.*

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**Frances Garcia** - July 21, 2014 at 12:55 PM

DL

*“ I was sorry and shocked to hear of Claire's passing. I always looked up to Claire for her professional wisdom and advice but also loved her fun loving personality. I always knew that I could count on Claire's support. UTMB was never the same after Claire's retirement. My sincere condolences, Harvey...you and your family are in my thoughts and prayers.*

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**Dick Lewis** - July 20, 2014 at 01:42 PM

DG

*“ Claire was a person so full of life. She will be truly missed, and I know she will still be watching out for all of us. s*

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**Debbie Gremillion** - July 20, 2014 at 11:06 AM

SL

*“ We are so saddened by the news of Claire's death. We have such great memories of her, including among many others the week in San Miguel de Allende with many marguerites in the evening on the roof top of the old casa. Our deepest condolences to Harve and all of Claire's family. Rest in peace, Claire.*

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**Stan & Penney Lemon** - July 19, 2014 at 05:08 PM

ST

*“ Alan and I were shocked and saddened to hear of Claire's passing. She was a mentor and major influence in my professional life. She and HB taught me everything I needed to be confident and successful at UTMB. The world will be less bright without her.*

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**Sharon tipton** - July 18, 2014 at 04:54 PM

LR

“ I was very shocked and saddened to hear of Claire's passing. Claire was truly a remarkable woman who was always willing to nurture and promote the development of all personnel at UTMB. She was a true friend and a great inspiration to all; and I admired her greatly.

*My prayers are with her family at this time.*

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**Linda Roberts** - July 18, 2014 at 12:59 PM

KS

“ I met Claire just after my Grandma Dottie passed away. Not only did she help fill the hole in my heart, she extended a generosity and caring to me and my sons that is priceless. She was one of the greatest lights of my life. There was never a time that she failed to give me a kind word, a nice lunch, or a long talk when I needed it most. She became part of my family and I will miss her with my whole heart. RIP Claire Bear. I love you dearly and will never forget your amazing influence in my life. HUGS and peaceful prayers to Harvey, Cutty, Liam, Flynn, and everyone else who is mourning this terrible loss.

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**Kristie Stevens** - July 18, 2014 at 10:09 AM

JC

“ Claire was the most interesting, well-grounded person I have ever met! She was an excellent mentor, counselor and friend. I owe my 27 year career at UTMB to Claire and Harvey. They mentored and supported me - always encouraging me to expand my knowledge and skills. She will forever hold a special place in my heart! My thoughts are with you all as you deal with the loss of such a magnificent lady!

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**Joyce Cooke** - July 18, 2014 at 08:28 AM

KE

“ Claire has been an influence in my life for well over 20 years. My world and the world in general is less bright without her. I always thought she was the most interesting person I had ever known and that I wanted to be as cool as she was but that would be impossible. I will miss our lunches here in Huntsville, our political discussions and everything about her. Her light will shine in my heart until we meet again. Rest in Peace my friend. My sincerest condolences to Harvey and their family.

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**Kathye Epley** - July 17, 2014 at 02:58 PM

ST

“ We send our deepest sympathies to you and your family Harve. God bless you all.

*Jeff&Crystal Foster*

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**Stillhere56,,,Jeff** - July 17, 2014 at 12:01 PM

LK

“ I am so sorry to hear of Claire's passing. Although I knew her many years ago, I have fond memories of her. My family lived next door to her in Galveston and I babysat Flynn and Cutty. She was a warm and caring person and I am sure she will be missed deeply.

*Lyn Ruhaak Klein*

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**Lyn Ruhaak Klein** - July 17, 2014 at 10:51 AM

EA

“ My darling BF (you know what that really means) Claire, you were one of the most positive and colorful influences in my life, and I thank you for so many things. Happy trails, my friend.

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**Evelyn Acree** - July 17, 2014 at 10:48 AM

GK

“ My Precious Claire, knowing you and loving you made my life so much better. The world is already less enjoyable without you but we will all go on and try to "be" as you would have wanted. Harvey, Jessica, Beau, Mike, Flynn and Cutty, thank you for sharing Claire with us. Adiós Claire preciosa y vaya con dios.

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**Guy Kidd** - July 17, 2014 at 10:40 AM

KR

“ Claire was truly a remarkable woman and one of a kind. She had an incredible gift that made everyone who had the opportunity to meet, work, learn, talk, or even goof off with her a better person for the experience. She made you want to be a better person in every form of the definition. Every life she touched was blessed from that point on. I will cherish the memories of spending time with her, the things she taught me and the compassion she always shared. Claire's passing is truly a loss for each of us who knew and loved her so. There is comfort and peace in knowing she is watching over us now and that we will have the opportunity to be together again one day. My thoughts and prayers are with you. Love y'all

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**Kelly Reagan** - July 17, 2014 at 09:13 AM

EL

“ Claire, I remember the day I first sat in your office in 1990 and saw your framed "When I am old, I shall wear purple". Somehow, that is how I picture you now, wherever you are, soaring with your purple gown flowing and long red nails and of course your fuchsia colored pen leaving stickie notes all along your way. Although we had our differences, you remain a significant woman in my life, one who changed my course repeatedly, and without whom I would not be where I am today. I can not begin to imagine the hole in Harvey's heart. My prayers and thoughts are with him. He was and is above all a great human being himself.

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**Elizabeth Livaudais** - July 17, 2014 at 08:40 AM

BR

“ I was sorry to hear of Claire's passing. I always looked up to Claire for her professional wisdom and advice but also loved her fun loving personality. My sincere condolences.

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**Bonnie Rhew** - July 16, 2014 at 05:38 PM

JS

“ Dear Claire, I knew the day was coming when you would step over, yet I was not prepared for the loss I feel in my heart with you gone. You were a true and trusted friend, and I so value all the time we had together - even running out of gas on our adventure to Mexico. Your wisdom, wit and incredible sense of humor were only a few of the virtues that set you apart from others. You had the gift of making each of us feel that we were your BESTEST friend, and I miss you dearly. No one can take your place! Rest in peace my friend. Love, Judy Pie

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**Judy Slocumb** - July 16, 2014 at 04:53 PM

ML

“ Claire, Thank you for all of the special memories that I carry close to my heart. I love you and am a better person because of you. Love- Meg LeBeau

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**Meg LeBeau** - July 16, 2014 at 03:57 PM

JL

“ Claire, you will be missed and thanks for the good memories!

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**Julia LeBeau** - July 16, 2014 at 03:25 PM

JL

“ Claire was definately a classy lady, and very sweet. My nephew, Liam loved her dearly. She will be missed. Rest in peace.

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**Jennifer LeBeau** - July 16, 2014 at 03:16 PM

EM

“ Claire, you will forever live in my heart. You shared many stories and I will never forget your passion for people. Countless hours of laughing and bird watching. I know that you are in good hands. I absolutely love you woman! Thanks for planting your seed in my life. Thanks for being an inspiration to generations to come. You always spoke about your family and your husband. I know that we will all miss you dearly. Big hugs friend, Ethel

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**Ethel Monroy** - July 15, 2014 at 05:36 PM

CC

“ I am so saddened to hear of Claire's passing and will always remember her from our days at TDC in Huntsville. We were both working to send husbands through college. It was an added bonus to meet up with Claire again when she began working at UTMB in Galveston. What a class act! The world is a good bit sadder place without her.

*Blessings to all of the family*

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**Cathy Copeland** - July 15, 2014 at 01:06 PM

JN

“ *Kathy, my family, and myself are greatly saddened by Claire's passing, we were fortunate to have known her as client and friend. Our memory of her will be with us always. She is now free from pain, and in peace with God.*

*With sincerest condolences,  
From Jerry, Kathy and family*

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**Jerry & Kathy from Kathy Nails** - July 15, 2014 at 12:48 PM