

Bernadine (Bernie) King
April 30, 1936 – December 17, 2005

Bernie was born in Saxton, Pennsylvania, on April 30, 1936. Her parents were Glenn and Iva Moffett. After a childhood in the Pennsylvania hills, she graduated from Saxton Liberty High School and left Pennsylvania for Washington, D.C. Bernie began working for the U.S. Navy in a clerical position in 1954. She was proud of her work for the Navy, an organization for which she worked for 34 years before retiring in 1988.

In 1956, Bernie met B. Joel (Joe) King, a Washington, D.C. native. She and Joe married in September 1957 and, at the time of her death, they had been married for over 48 years. (Not bad in a day and age where some unions seem to be over after 48 days!) They began their married life in Washington, but soon settled in Arlington, Virginia, which has been their home ever since. Although Bernie and Joe were not blessed with children of their own, through the years they helped and nurtured a number of family members, including, especially, Delores and Bill King, who consider themselves very lucky to have had such a special aunt and uncle in their lives. She grew especially close to her sister-in-law and brother-in-law, Blanche and Tom Dawson. In addition, she and Joe have been “mommy” and “daddy” to a multitude of dogs and cats (and, occasionally, other animals) that entered their lives over the years. A Bichon Frise named Lacey and a horse named Stormy are the most recent of these animals that held a special place in Bernie’s heart.

Bernie just loved life in general and enjoyed having a good time. For many years, she and Joe threw New Years Eve parties where the highlights included Joe’s meatballs and ringing all sorts of loud bells out the front door at the stroke of midnight. She particularly loved the sport of bowling. She and Joe bowled together on leagues and in tournaments and she even spent a year bowling on the U.S. Department of Transportation bowling league with her niece, Delores. Although her health necessitated that she stop actually bowling around 1999, she continued to be involved in a sport she loved by serving on the Board of the Washington, D.C. Area Women’s Bowling Association, most recently holding the title of President of the Association.

Bernie also enjoyed playing Bingo, most recently at the American Legion on Tuesday evenings with her husband, Joe, and her sister-in-law, Blanche. They didn’t always win anything, but always had a good time just being together. Joe worked for the National Symphony Orchestra for many years before retiring in 2004. Bernie loved the orchestra and its members and especially enjoyed going to the Memorial Day, Fourth of July, and Labor Day concerts on the Washington Mall that featured the orchestra.

She also used to clean her house with such regularity that some of us used to tell her that cleaning must be her favorite hobby! In fact, when she retired, Delores jokingly told her that she should hire herself out for cleaning services to earn some extra spending money. She never did that, though. Although she was a little bit of a thing, she was spunky and anyone who knew Bernie also knew that she didn’t hesitate to speak her mind or stand up for what she thought was right.

The above is just a little bit of who was Bernie King and everyone who knew her has his or her own memories. In summary, though, Bernie was a good person who loved and was loved by lots of folks. Her family and other loved ones that she leaves behind will miss her very much but can always feel blessed that she was a part of their lives.