



Margaret P. (Byers) Taylor

October 21, 1943 - July 20, 2025

MARGARET P. (BYERS) TAYLOR OBITUARY

Margaret P. (Byers) Taylor left this world for the next early on Sunday, July 20th, 2025, surrounded by her loving daughters. She is preceded in death by her mother Norene Byers, father Virgil Byers, sister Pamela Byers, sister Phyllis Byers Kelly, and her loving husband Joe Taylor.

Born in Blanchard, OK, Margaret's family spent time Highlands, TX, then settled in Bryan County, OK where she attended middle school. There she met the love of her life, Joe Taylor, at age 14. They celebrated 60 years of loving marriage before his passing in 2023.

When she was 19 years old she went to Chautauqua, NY as an opera scholarship student and her love for that place was ignited. She went back nearly every summer since 1982 with her family and even sponsored several scholarship students to have the same experience she had in going to that beloved place to grow, explore, and celebrate learning.

The first person in her family to get a college degree, Margaret earned a BA in Music Education from Southeastern Oklahoma State University and went on to become a music teacher to many lucky recipients of her vast love of music.

While she was a teacher she helped pay for her husband Joe to go to law school, an incredibly impressive feat at the time.

After having her three lovely daughters Margaret became interested in law school and decided to pursue her own legal career. One of only two women in her tract at the time, Margaret received her Juris Doctorate from the University of Oklahoma.

She practiced both criminal and civil law, becoming the second female lawyer in Durant, OK. She gave much of her time to pro bono work, helping women in difficult situations and others in need. She claimed to be more of a humanitarian than a lawyer, which was shown through her actions. She gave counsel to many in need, without looking for recognition or adoration. Throughout her life she believed strongly in the rule of law.

Margaret's love for music was deep and inclusive. After law school in Durant she was part of a local band called "Phyllis Kelly and the Lawyers" (named by her children as an homage to Joan Jett and the Blackhearts), and played many gigs around town and for local organizations. She loved to play the piano, and instilled a love of music in her three daughters who eventually formed their own band and dedicated their music to her and their father. She often sang with her husband, and their duet version of "Smokey Joe's Café" was a favorite of theirs and of many others throughout the years.

Always contributing and helping, some of the organizations Margaret belonged to are: The Bryan County Bar Association, Oklahoma Shakespearean Festival (Board Member), Bryan County Federation of Democratic Women (President and Board Member), Day Spring Church, The Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle, The Chautauqua Women's Club, The Chautauqua Bird, Tree, & Garden Club.

Margaret loved the arts, was an avid reader, loved to travel, learn, laugh, and loved animals - especially the many dogs she and Joe had throughout their lives – and considered herself “An Oklahoma girl through and through.” She was an extremely loyal friend with an empathetic heart and spirit, and truly believed in fairness and that your word had meaning. She met people where they were, and always tried to lead with love. She became a surrogate mother and grandmother to many family members and a “chosen grandmother” to many others. All the while with a twinkle in her eye and a place for you in her heart.

She was also strong in her faith. She found a lot of comfort in Psalms, especially during difficult times, namely Psalms 1:21. The last time Margaret rose from bed was to go to the couch to watch church.

She’s now reunited with the love of her life.

Margaret is survived by her three daughters, Marna (Brad Pemberton) Taylor, Leah and Jocelyn Taylor, brothers Joe Lee (Mary) Byers, Bob (Randi) Byers, sister-in-law Marilyn Mitchell, brother-in-law David Kelly, brother-in-law Terry (Renee) Taylor, sister-in-law Ethel Talbot. Nieces and nephews Jason (Lynn) Kelly, Laura (Jay) Kelly Cannon, Pamela (Aaron) Byers Smith, Patrick (Katie) Byers, Adam Byers, Abbey Byers, Jeannie (John) Taylor Torrance, Natalie (Billy) Taylor Vanover, Daniel (Lauren) Taylor, and special friends Kim Kamplain, Melanie Hearon (and family), Katrina Farr (and family), Nema & Cris Criswell and many other special family members and friends.

If you would like to honor Margaret Taylor, please consider donating to one of these organizations:

Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center www.give.vanderbilthealth.org

The Oklahoma Shakespearean Festival (send a message asking how to contribute to the memorial fund in Margaret Taylor's name) www.oklahomasha kes.com/contact

<https://www.tributeslides.com/tributes/show/KRXTFPY37KW4RPF7>

Cemetery Details

Highland Cemetery

1620 Cemetery Rd
Durant, OK

Previous Events

Family and Friends Visitation

JUL **25**. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Brown's Funeral Chapel
4900 West US Hwy 70
Durant, OK 74701

Funeral

JUL **26**. 10:00 AM (CT)

The Chapel at Bell Tower
218 N 3rd
Durant , OK 74701
<https://www.belltowerdurant.com/>

Tribute Wall



“ *Brown's Durant Funeral Service created a Tribute Video in memory of Margaret P. (Byers) Taylor*



Brown's Durant Funeral Service - July 24, 2025 at 02:43 PM

DP

“ *Marna, Jocelyn, and Leah, Paula and I are so sorry to hear of the passing of Margaret. We were on a trip out of state and could not attend the service. As you know, both of your parents meant the world to my parents as well as me. Joe, my father and me were all in the Army Reserve together which gives me some great memories. All of you know how much Margaret and Joe always loved being with family whenever they could. I will always remember Margaret's love of music and what a great lady she was!*

David (Butch) Parker - July 27, 2025 at 07:32 PM

SC

“ *Sherah Carney purchased the Days of Sunshine Bouquet for the family of Margaret P. (Byers) Taylor.*



Sherah Carney - July 24, 2025 at 09:20 PM

DJ

“ Danny James purchased the Enchanted Cottage for the family of Margaret P. (Byers) Taylor.



Danny James - July 24, 2025 at 06:34 PM

DJ

“ Danny James planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Margaret P. (Byers) Taylor.

Danny James - July 24, 2025 at 06:34 PM

LF

“ Love, the Farmer and Manzanares family purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of Margaret P. (Byers) Taylor.



Love, the Farmer and Manzanares family - July 24, 2025 at 05:16 PM

WD

“ With love, Deb purchased the Country Basket Blooms for the family of Margaret P. (Byers) Taylor.



With love, Deb - July 24, 2025 at 04:08 PM

WD

“ With love, Deb planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Margaret P. (Byers) Taylor.

With love, Deb - July 24, 2025 at 04:08 PM



“ Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Margaret P. (Byers) Taylor.



July 24, 2025 at 03:50 PM



“ Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Margaret P. (Byers) Taylor.



July 24, 2025 at 02:33 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Margaret P. (Byers) Taylor.

July 24, 2025 at 02:33 PM

TR

“ Trish, Bryndan & Rilyn purchased the Serene Retreat for the family of Margaret P. (Byers) Taylor.



Trish, Bryndan & Rilyn - July 24, 2025 at 01:48 PM

SC

“ Sam and Carol Cook purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Margaret P. (Byers) Taylor.



Sam and Carol Cook - July 24, 2025 at 01:26 PM

NC

“ Margaret (and Joe) were in and around my life for years, mainly through knowing my mom and stepfather. Mom and Pistol had so much respect that it spilled over to me. They were genuinely good, caring people. Margaret was always someone I respected, and watched for an example. She was so self-assured that I was at first sometimes intimidated, but I grew to love her, and your family. I am sorry for her passing, because of the pain it causes all who knew her. I truly believe she is now with her beloved Joe, probably singing their praises to the Lamb, and perhaps even "Smokey Joe's". My prayer is that God will be actively comforting those who mourn. She was an example of a strong, confident woman, and she was the mother of three strong women. Marna, Leah and Jocelyn, my heart goes out to you, but I know you will weather this storm, also. May God keep His arm around your shoulders, as you continue in your own lives, with Margaret's example to guide you.

Nancy Conner - July 24, 2025 at 10:43 AM

MJ

“ *Much love, Debbie (James) & Erik Jansson purchased the Days of Sunshine Bouquet for the family of Margaret P. (Byers) Taylor.*



Much love, Debbie (James) & Erik Jansson - July 24, 2025 at 10:42 AM

RF

“ *Roger Byers and family purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Margaret P. (Byers) Taylor.*



Roger Byers and family - July 23, 2025 at 09:19 PM

IN

“ *From that moment when we first met all of you in Chautauqua, at the restaurant and sat next to your table, Mort and I knew we had met new friends whom we would cherish and laugh with, and share so many sweet times together. I am so sad but truly glad we knew and loved Joe and Margaret and you wonderful daughters!!! Hugs, Iris (November)*

iris November - July 23, 2025 at 09:10 PM

LK

“ *Love, Dan amd Kim purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of Margaret P. (Byers) Taylor.*



Love, Dan amd Kim - July 23, 2025 at 08:50 PM

KF

“ Katie and Frank purchased the Florist Choice Bouquet for the family of Margaret P. (Byers) Taylor.



Katie and Frank - July 23, 2025 at 08:15 PM

DS

“ So many memories with your family. Highlight was Mom's 75th Birthday Sock Hop where Margaret and Joe came, dressed up, jitterbugged and still looked at each other like newlyweds. So inspiring!

Debby Santens - July 23, 2025 at 05:26 PM

DS

“ Debby S. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Margaret P. (Byers) Taylor.

Debby S. - July 23, 2025 at 05:11 PM



“ Beautiful Dreams was purchased for the family of Margaret P. (Byers) Taylor.



July 23, 2025 at 04:24 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Margaret P. (Byers) Taylor.

July 23, 2025 at 04:24 PM



“ John, Jeannie, Ryan, Russell and Ethel purchased the Small Garden Dish for the family of Margaret P. (Byers) Taylor.



John, Jeannie, Ryan, Russell and Ethel - July 23, 2025 at 03:53 PM



“ John, Jeannie, Ryan, Russell and Ethel planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Margaret P. (Byers) Taylor.

John, Jeannie, Ryan, Russell and Ethel - July 23, 2025 at 03:53 PM



“ She was amazing. We loved her very much.

Katheryn Moreno Nangulari and Jason Brown

Jason Brown - July 23, 2025 at 01:45 PM



“ A grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Margaret P. (Byers) Taylor.

July 23, 2025 at 01:41 PM

SR

“ Riley Risso Coker, daughter of OSF founder Molly Risso and longtime friend of Margaret Taylor, along with the Board of Directors of the Oklahoma Shakespearean Festival (OSF) have established a memorial fund to OSF in Margaret Taylor’s name. Her decades of service to OSF giving her time, talents, gifts, and creative instincts helped to make OSF the instrument of the arts it is today. We will miss her but will forever cherish her and her passion for OSF. We extend our sympathy to Marna, Leah, and Jocelyn and other family members and dear friends

Sharon Robinson - July 22, 2025 at 05:28 PM

RL

Can you please provide a link where we could donate to the memorial fund?

Robert Lloyd-Charles - July 24, 2025 at 04:58 AM

AL

“ Abbey Byers & Connor Lisle purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of Margaret P. (Byers) Taylor.



Abbey Byers & Connor Lisle - July 22, 2025 at 02:11 PM



“ Sweet Solace Spray was purchased for the family of Margaret P. (Byers) Taylor.



July 22, 2025 at 02:06 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Margaret Pearl Taylor.

July 22, 2025 at 02:06 PM



“ Brigid McMahon purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of Margaret P. (Byers) Taylor.



Brigid McMahon - July 21, 2025 at 04:58 PM



“ Your LEO Events family purchased the Rays of Light Spray for the family of Margaret P. (Byers) Taylor.



Your LEO Events family - July 21, 2025 at 04:44 PM



“ Your LEO Events family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Margaret Pearl Taylor.

Your LEO Events family - July 21, 2025 at 04:44 PM

YG

“ Your Nashville girls purchased the Joyful Memory for the family of Margaret P. (Byers) Taylor.



Your Nashville girls - July 21, 2025 at 01:32 PM

YG

“ Your Nashville girls planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Margaret Pearl Taylor.

Your Nashville girls - July 21, 2025 at 01:32 PM