



Narayanikutty "Sumathi" Natarajan

December 15, 2017

Narayanikutty "Sumathi" Natarajan, beloved wife, devoted mother and grandmother, dedicated and caring nurse, died on December 15, 2017 after a prolonged illness, surrounded by her family. She was 84.

Sumathi was born on August 4, 1933, only three days after C.R., her husband of 54 years. She was the fourth of five children, and the last of her siblings to survive. Her mother and father, Meenakshi and Parangodan Nair, both died when Sumathi was a child. Sumathi and her siblings raised each other with little in the way of resources, nourishment or parental guidance.

For those born amongst the rice paddies of western India, few found their way out, and even fewer to pursue their education and careers. In 1952, Sumathi became one of those very few, moving to Madras, India to study nursing at Madras Nursing School. After graduating with the Florence Nightingale Gold Medal and McDougal Medal for best nursing student in the state of Madras, she would later become a nursing instructor at the same school. It was also where she found C.R. Natarajan, a young medical student at neighbouring Madras Medical University. Soon after their first date to see Bridge on the River Kwai, they knew they had found their true loves. Despite being from different castes (Sumathi of higher caste than C.R., mind you), and both having been arranged to marry others (a common protocol in India, and the only protocol in 1950's India), they believed in their love and married on September 16th, 1963.

Three years later, they were blessed with their daughter Anuradha, and three

years after that, pursued the American dream, immigrating to Chicago, Illinois. Armed with 24 U.S. dollars and their educations, Sumathi, C.R. and Anu began their new lives - C.R. as an intern at Grant Hospital, Sumathi as a nurse at Passavant Memorial Hospital, and Anu as a pre-schooler at Villa Christian School.

After a short stint in Queens New York, and a return to Chicago for a few years more (when and where their son Rajsekhar would be born), they finally moved to their permanent home in the United States, Olney, Illinois. In Olney, they found a rural community similar to that of Kerala, only the rice, goats and Rhesus monkeys were replaced with beans, hogs and white squirrels. From 1974 to 1982, Sumathi would take a break from her nursing career to focus full-time on the nurturing and development of her two children. She finished her nursing career at Richland Memorial Hospital where she practiced for 16 years. Sumathi and C.R. would spend 28 years in Olney, celebrating numerous friends, nursing thousands back to good health, with evenings spent walking with the family dog Tom and relaxing on East Fork Lake. They retired to Ft. Myers, Florida in 2003, where they quickly found themselves at the center of a blossoming Indian community. They helped build the new Hindu temple and made dear friends at the Legends Golf Club. But after years of evening strolls around the golf course, good times with friends and family, and service to the Lord, all yielded to Sumathi's medical concerns, her loss of balance and loss of memories.

In 2012, Sumathi and C.R. moved to Atlanta to be closer to family. As she struggled more each day to remember the short term, to keep her balance on short walks, and to go about her daily routine, her keen mind would continue to find brilliant responses when no one would expect it. Her wit and charm remained through her final days. In her last years, she was blessed with the loving care and support of a number of caretakers, including Lillian, Cho, Joy, Helen, Edwine, Alexandra, Micheline and Veronique.

Throughout Sumathi's life, a few things remained constant: each person who crossed her path would not forget her smile; her fearlessness and conviction

of character were guiding lights, not only for herself, but also her family and friends; her devotion to and unwavering support of her family made them who they are; and her love and fear of God earned her a place in His home.

Sumathi is survived by C.R.; Anu, her husband Lokendra, and their four children, Elika, Rehna, Arjan and Arya, all of Johns Creek, Georgia; Raj, his wife Carter, and their four children, Jude, Bodhi, Violet and Ren, all of Charlotte, NC, and numerous nieces and nephews throughout the globe.

A service to celebrate Sumathi's life will be held at Flanigan's Funeral Home at 4400 South Lee Street, Buford, Georgia on Monday, December 18, 2017, at 4:30 p.m. Phone: 770.932.1133. Those wishing to make a contribution in Sumathi's memory are encouraged to consider CurePSP at psp.org or 443.578.5670, or the Olney Central College Foundation, Sumathi Natarajan Memorial Nursing Scholarship at OCC Foundation, 305 North West St., Olney, IL 62450 or 618.395.7777, ext. 2003.

Tribute Wall



“ *Narayanikutty "Sumathi" Natarajan*

November 08, 2022 at 07:37 PM



“ *Our most sincere condolences and prayers for the loss of a wonderful and caring lady. I got to know the Natarajan's growing up in Olney. MY brother and I are class mates of their beautiful daughter Anu. Raj along with with Rob Terrell and I, spent a few weekends at McDonald's having fun. My first position in law enforcement was with the Olney Police and I spent many an evening talking to the Natarajans about life and the boats causing bow waves on their property :) With love and prayers for the rest of the family on their loss.*

*Harry and Gina Davis
Shumway(Effingham County,)Illinois*

Harold and Gina Davis - December 28, 2017 at 12:00 AM

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“ Dr. Sheth, we are so sorry for your loss. We pray that you and your family find strength and comfort during this difficult time. You and your family are in our hearts and minds. Our sincere condolences on the passing of your mother.

Love,
Rhonda Johnson
Asha Colvard

Rhonda Johnson - December 21, 2017 at 12:00 AM

DW

“ Dear Natarajan family,
We send our deepest condolences to you. We have nothing but warm memories of her and her beautiful smile. Oh how she enjoyed her family! I remember her chuckling as she shared a story about one of her children. She loved you so much. I know you are well aware how blessed you were to have her as a wife and mother. I'm sorry that she had such a difficult struggle in recent years. You are in our prayers.

Dr.Pete and Ellen

Dr. Pete and Ellen Weber - December 21, 2017 at 12:00 AM

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“ Dear Dr. Natarajan, Anu, and Raj and Families,
This is sent with deep sympathy over your beloved Sumathi. You were all loved in Olney, IL. and I appreciated that you gave my son Jerry Lyon rides home from University of Illinois. He also sends his sympathy. Yes, Anu, you were homecoming queen at U of I and of course an excellent student. Jerry graduated from there in EI Engineering and he and his family live in St. Charles, MO. Many prayers will be with all of you as you carry on for your families.
Sincerely, Mrs. Esworhty (Sandra)

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Denny & Donna Sharma
Fort Myers, FL
239-770-7427

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Please know that your Weber Medical Clinic family are thinking of all of you at this most difficult time. May you find comfort and peace in your memories of your beautiful wife, mother, and grandmother.

Jana Dehner

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*With love,
Kyle, Natalie, Peyton, and Claire Coker*

Natalie Coker - December 18, 2017 at 12:00 AM

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Natalie Coker - December 18, 2017 at 12:00 AM

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