

Remembering
Marcia Kierscht

February 17, 1940 - April 21, 2025

Funeral Service

Saturday, May 3, 2025 - 10:00 AM

Hanson-Runsvold Funeral Home - Fargo, North Dakota

Celebrant

Pat Ellison

Music

New World Symphony (Dvorak) - *Thalia Weber Selland*

Hallelujah - *John Cale*

A Song For You - *Ray Charles*

Pallbearers

Tom Selland Theresa Selland Thor Selland
Jaclyn Weber Tommy Selland Torsten Selland
Tabitha Selland Thalia Weber Selland

Honorary Pallbearers

Keith Ellingson Chris Bohnet

Burial

Riverside Cemetery
Fargo, North Dakota

All are invited to a luncheon following the service.



**HANSON
RUNSVOLD**
Cremation • Burial

Dr. Marcia Ann Selland Kierscht was born on February 17, 1940, in Rugby, North Dakota, to Osmund Harold and Cynthia Miranda Thoresen Selland. Her father was employed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and her mother was a Social Studies teacher at Rugby High School. She was the first grandchild born to her grandparents, Lieutenant Governor (ND) Thorstein Hartvik Haugen and Inga Mendina Vigen Thoresen of Grand Forks, North Dakota, and Osmund and Anna Tjon Selland of Rugby, North Dakota.

The family moved to Fargo, North Dakota during her first year where she was raised. Her brother Osmund Thomas Harold was born in 1941, and her brother Bryan Curtis was born in 1945. Her father died in 1945 the first week after she entered first grade at Little Ben Franklin elementary school at 5 years old. In 5th grade, Marcia entered Horace Mann elementary school then was one of the first class of 7th graders who entered the new Ben Franklin Junior High School. She graduated from Fargo Central High School in 1957. While a student in the Fargo Schools, she played principal viola in school orchestras and joined the Fargo-Moorhead Symphony Orchestra as its youngest member. She was a member of the Debate Team, Science Club, an officer of the Red Cross chapter and attended state and national Red Cross leadership camps during high school. She started her first paid job at age 16 working after school and during summers at the Rose Shop, in women's clothing.

Marcia entered college at North Dakota State University at 16 while still a high school student. After high school graduation in 1957, she entered the University of Iowa as a junior where she participated in the Honors Program in English and was a member of Kappa Kappa Gamma sorority. She graduated with a BA in English with minors in French and Psychology in 1960 and was awarded a graduate assistantship in psychology where she received her MA in 1962. In 1961, she married Charles Mason Kierscht, a University of Iowa law student, the son of Dr. Charles N. and Florence Mason Kierscht, of Arlington, Virginia. They have two children, Cynthia Ann Kierscht and Matthew Mason Kierscht, born in Chicago in 1965 and 1968 respectively.

Marcia served as psychologist for the Washington County, Iowa schools and later for South Suburban Cook County, District 108 Highland Park, and Lake County public schools in Illinois until 1972 when she entered George Peabody College of Vanderbilt University as a doctoral student and psychologist for the Child Development Clinic of the Kennedy Center and Vanderbilt Medical School. While a student, she also taught at Peabody College, Vanderbilt Nursing school, and served as a Research Associate at the Kennedy Center. She earned her Ph.D. in Psychology in 1975 from Vanderbilt and was appointed Instructor in Pediatrics and Psychologist at Vanderbilt's Child Development Clinic.

In 1976, Dr. Kierscht became Director of the graduate program in School Psychology at Moorhead State University, MN. While a faculty member, she conducted and published research in follow up of survivors of neonatal intensive care, sex role stereotyping in preschool children, and children's attitudes towards their handicapped peers. She served as the Minnesota delegate to the National Association of School Psychologists and developed and guided national accreditation of the Educational Specialist degree in School Psychology. In 1979, she was selected as an American Council on Education Fellow in Academic Administration and became Assistant to Moorhead State University President Roland Dille. While in that position, she also served as director of the summer school and filled in as acting Director of Development and acting Vice President for Advancement.

In 1985, Dr. Kierscht was named Provost of the Tri-College University, an accredited consortium of Moorhead State University, North Dakota State University, and Concordia College. She was the first woman to hold this position. While Provost, the Tri-College program in nursing received initial accreditation from the National League for Nursing, and Tri-College was re-accredited as the only consortium in the United States accredited as a separate degree granting institution by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. In addition, the Educational Administration program was initially accredited by the National Association of Colleges of Teacher Education. Dr. Kierscht subsequently served as a consultant evaluator for both NCA and NCATE as well as New England Association and Middle States Associations of Colleges and Schools. During this time, she also served on the Forward Fargo Committee of the Fargo Chamber of Commerce, became the first female member of the Moorhead Rotary Club, served as Vice President of the Board of the Plains Art Museum, and was the first woman to Chair the board of the Fargo Moorhead Area Foundation which she did for six years. During her time as chair, the Foundation hired its first executive director.

In Loving Memory

In 1990, Dr. Kierscht was named Dean of the Graduate and Professional Schools of Hood College in Frederick, Maryland, where she started the Graduate Advisory Council, and opened a satellite campus in Shady Grove, MD. During this time, she served as Chair of the Board of Directors of the Council on Interinstitutional Leadership, the national association of academic consortia in higher education. While at Hood College, she served on the Montgomery County, MD High Tech Council. In 1993, she became Vice President of the Consortium of Universities of the Washington (DC) Metropolitan Area (CUWMA). While in Washington, Dr. Kierscht became one of the first female members of the Cosmos Club which she continued throughout her life.

In 1994, Dr. Kierscht became the second woman president of Stephens College, Columbia, MO. During her 9-year presidency of Stephens, the campus underwent extensive renovation beginning with a master plan to consolidate its 1.1 million square feet of facilities into a more compact and efficient campus for its 1000 students. She organized and executed the college's first capital campaign to raise funds to enhance the campus and build the college endowment. The endowment was nearly tripled during her tenure, faculty rank was instituted as well as merit pay for faculty. The College reinstated intercollegiate athletics and added NCAA Basketball, Volleyball, Soccer, Swimming and Tennis to the college offerings. To support these activities, she raised the money to build the Silverthorn Arena which opened during her presidency. She represented Presidents of Division III institutions on the Management Council of NCAA Division III.

As President of Stephens, Dr. Kierscht traveled to womens' colleges in Japan and Korea and developed exchange programs with those universities that brought numerous students to Stephens each year and provided host institutions for Stephens students for study abroad. While in Columbia, MO, she served on the Board of Directors of the Chamber of Commerce, the advisory committee for Palliative Care at Boone Hospital, and was a member of the Columbia Rotary Club.

In the academic area of the college, Dr. Kierscht strengthened the Liberal Arts offerings, particularly in Biological Sciences, started the graduate programs in Business and Medical Records Management, and had the college reaccredited to also offer graduate degrees. Her attempts to improve the quality of faculty qualifications included introduction of rank to the review of faculty, and made merit pay a part of the faculty reward system.

When she decided to retire in 2003 after nine years at Stephens, Marcia characteristically did not slow down. Splitting the year between her homes in Alexandria, VA and Perham, MN, she was able to spend more time at her beloved lake home on Devils Lake with her daughter and her nephews and their families where she loved to host and spend time in and on the lake swimming or in her racing scull. In Washington, she spent time running, biking, cross-country skiing during the occasional snow, and attending events with friends at the Kennedy Center and the Cosmos Club. She served as the Vice President of the prestigious Philosophical Society of Washington. She volunteered and served as a docent at the Library of Congress for several years, sharing her knowledge of the most beautiful building in Washington with visitors, and participated actively in her Old Town Alexandria book club.

Marcia also continued an active life of travel to visit her daughter, Cynthia, in her postings in Rabat, Morocco, where she met and fell in love with her kitty, Yoda; Bogota, Colombia, where Yoda often traveled with her for Christmas; and Nouakchott, Mauritania, where her daughter was the U.S. Ambassador. A curious traveler, she had previously visited her daughter in postings in Egypt, France and Tunisia. She spent so much time in Mauritania that she was considered the "grandma" to many in the Embassy and the mother to all of Cynthia's bodyguard/driver team. Her travel also consisted of annual road trips, usually with her cousin Debbie Rohla, and Yoda, driving back and forth from Washington, DC to "the lake" in Perham, MN where many stories were shared.

Marcia was preceded in death by her mother and father and her two brothers, Bryan Curtis and Osmund Thomas Selland. She leaves behind her two children, Cynthia and Matthew (Brenda), her granddaughter Kennedy, her nephews O. Thomas Selland (Theresa) and Thor (Jaclyn) Selland and their families who called her "grandmaunt," Tommy, Torsten, Tabitha, and Thalia. Despite all of her many professional accomplishments, she would often say that the best thing she had ever done in life was having her two children. She will be deeply missed on many continents.



Marcia Selland Kierscht

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