



Mary Jean (MJ) Nelson

February 20, 1943 - November 17, 2025

Mary Jean (MJ) Nelson passed away on November 17, 2025, at St. Otto's Care Center in Little Falls, MN. A private burial will take place at a later date. Caring for Mary Jean and her family is the LeMieur Funeral Home in Little Falls, MN.

Mary was born February 20, 1943 in Little Falls, the daughter of the late Albert & Helen (Olson) Nelson. She graduated from Swanville High School and the University of Minnesota with a BA in Journalism. While in college, she was an avid tennis player. Mary enjoyed horses and dogs, in particular Chesapeake Bay Retrievers (which she owned for 67 years) and Brittany Spaniels. She owned several show champions with hunt test and obedience titles. Mary worked for 3M Company and for nearly 20 years, was an investigative reporter for The Farmer Magazine. She also did public affairs work for the U.S. Navy. She was a freelance writer for dog and horse magazines and, for the past 35 years, has written for Dog News and Canine Chronicles. For the past 42 years, she edited "The Mutual Monitor" twice yearly for township mutual insurance companies. Mary wrote and produced a Veterans Day show for many years, and was a grant writer and organized a choral day for a local community chorus.

Mary is survived by her sister-in-law, Ardith Nelson; along with numerous

nephews, nieces, grandnephews and nieces and great-grandnephews and nieces, her dog Deuce, as well as friends.

She was preceded in death by her parents; brother, Albert "Stub" Nelson; two sisters, Avis Nelson Mattson and Iris Nelson Kivimaki; and two brothers-in-law, Vernon Mattson and Rudolph Kivimaki.

Tribute Wall

IJ

“ Ingrid J. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mary Jean (MJ) Nelson.

Ingrid J. - December 02, 2025 at 03:11 PM

AG

“ I am very sorry to hear this news! She was a wonderful leader to many children in the Honor Squad which she headed up for many years. She taught them punctuality, respect , honor and being a team. She encouraged them in reading about our history. She also had a soft heart for children in painting their faces in camo out at Fort Ripley overnights and liked rewarding their work. She played a very valuable part of 5 of my kids lives! None of us will forget her and we treasure the memories!

Annette Guthrie - November 25, 2025 at 06:41 PM

NH

“ Lots of fond memories with MJ with 5 of our kids in USA Honor Squad & her dedication to teaching 3-6 graders respect & discipline. Not to mention chatting & visiting her & her pampered pooches! Like her brother Stub, she "did it her way".

Nat Holmgren - November 24, 2025 at 08:10 PM