



## Grace Marion Bydalek

June 23, 1919 - September 17, 2018

Grace M. (Twitty) Bydalek, 99, of Kankakee, Illinois, died Monday, September 17, 2018 at Dobson Plaza Nursing Home in Evanston, IL.

Grace was born June 23, 1919, in Chicago, Illinois, the daughter of English immigrants Henry and Eleanor (Casson) Twitty. She is survived by one brother James Twitty (Mary Ann) of Sun City Center, FL, sister-in-law Marilyn Twitty of Christopher, IL, many nieces, nephews, and their children and grandchildren, and many friends.

She was preceded in death by her parents, one sister, Pauline H. Twitty Narve, two brothers, Robert W. Twitty and Charles H. Twitty, and a very special friend, Sebold 'Dick' Schoon.

After graduating from Zeigler, IL High School in 1937, Grace attended Bethel Women's College in Hopkinsville, KY from 1937 to 1939, with a major in English and minor in History. She transferred to Southern Illinois Normal University in Carbondale, attending from 1940 to 1942 and receiving a Bachelor of Education, with a major in English and P.E. and minor in History. She attended Middlebury College (Writer's School) in Middlebury, Vermont in 1942, and, in the summer of 1944, attended the University of Chicago. She later continued her education earning a Master of Arts from the University of Illinois in 1952. She also took classes at Bradley University in Peoria, IL. Grace held IL teaching certificates for high school grades and a Guidance certificate for grades K-14. Her career in education spanned 45 years. During her years at SIU she served as President of Sigma Tau Delta

(International Honor Society for Students of English) and Editor of Scarab (published in magazine form and containing short stories, poems and essays written by University students). She was also a member of Delta Sigma Epsilon, the Orientation Booklet and Homecoming Committee and WAA. Grace was employed with Kankakee School District 111 from September 1947 until her retirement on May 5, 1987. Her prior employment included IL high school districts of Dundee from 1945-47, and Momence 1942-1945. During her 40 years with Kankakee Schools, she held positions at Eastridge High School, teaching English and serving as Guidance Director. She was the Director of Musicals from 1972 to 1986 and was also the Play Director for many years. In addition, she served as senior, junior, sophomore, and freshman class sponsor during various years. She also served at East Junior High School, Kankakee, and as Director of Guidance in Kankakee Schools. A lifelong member of the Episcopal Church, Grace was baptized in Chicago and confirmed at St. Paul's Church in Zeigler on November 15, 1931, by Bishop John Chanler White. She was a faithful member of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Kankakee for many years. She worked tirelessly for the church, serving on the Fundraising Committee and working to coordinate food and crafts for fundraising activities.

Grace was involved in many organizations both at the state and local levels. President of the IL Junior High School Association (1957) and chairman of the state Guidance Survey Committee (1958). She was also a Member of the Executive Committee of the IL Guidance & Personnel Association, now known as the Illinois Counseling Association. She was President of Kankakee Federation of Teachers and led them through a strike in 1975.

Grace was committed to the arts, serving on the Board of Directors of the Kankakee Valley Symphony Orchestra Association Board, as a Board member of the Kankakee Valley Symphony Orchestra Foundation, and in 1988, joining The Women's Board of the Kankakee Valley Symphony Orchestra Association, serving a number of years as President. She was honored as a member emerita (life time member) of The Women's Board in

2017.

In 1996, she was recognized by the Community Foundation of Kankakee River Valley as an Outstanding Volunteer for Arts and Culture. She was a longtime member of the Minerva Club, serving as President in 2002-03, and a very active and longtime member of the Kankakee Kultivators, serving as President in 1995.

During her younger years she enjoyed snow skiing, white water rafting, and canoeing. Grace was an aficionado of the Opera and Symphony Orchestra in Chicago, attending numerous performances. She also loved visiting the new exhibits at the Art Institute of Chicago, even when she was not volunteering at the Institute. She was an avid reader and a member of the Tuesday Night Book Club.

Grace enjoyed traveling. She visited her grandparents in England at a young age and then returned in later years. She also traveled to many other countries, including Australia. She immensely adored flower gardening and arranging flowers.

A Requiem Mass for Grace will be held at 11 a.m., Wednesday, September 26, 2018 at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Kankakee, with the Rev. Israel D. Anchen and the Venerable Shawn W. Denney, officiating. Private burial will follow the service.

Visitation will be from 10 am to 11 am on Wednesday, September 26, 2018, at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Kankakee.

Memorial contributions in memory of Grace may be made to St. Paul's Mission and Ministry C/O St. Paul's Episcopal Church. Envelopes will be available at the visitation and funeral or may be mailed to the Church at 298 South Harrison Avenue, Kankakee, Illinois 60901.

Please sign her online guestbook at [www.schrefflerfuneralhomes.com](http://www.schrefflerfuneralhomes.com)

# Previous Events

## Visitation

SEP **26.** 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

St. Paul's Episcopal Church  
298 S. Harrison Ave  
Kankakee, IL 60901  
(815) 932-6611

## Funeral Service

SEP **26.** 11:00 AM (CT)

St. Paul's Episcopal Church  
298 S. Harrison Ave  
Kankakee, IL 60901  
(815) 932-6611

# Tribute Wall



“ *Grace Marion Bydalek*

February 03, 2023 at 04:30 AM



“ *Rest in peace, Grace. Our condolences to family.*

*George and Jane Potter*

**Jane H Potter** - September 27, 2018 at 05:40 PM



“ *My father, Tom Harro, and Grace were good friends so I grew up with Grace participating in some of our family activities namely water skiing on the Kankakee River. When I was in High School at Eastridge she helped me get a scholarship to Eastern Illinois University to become a teacher. In her later years I had the privilege of working with her to improve her strength and well being. She was a special person to me and I feel blessed to have had her in my life.*

*Kathleen Harro Steffen*

**Kathleen Steffen** - September 26, 2018 at 11:13 PM



“ *Grace was a wonderful friend. I knew her when we were both involved in the Kankakee Symphony Orchestra Women's Board. She loved music and also her beautiful flowers in her yard. My condolences to her family.*

*Sharon Panozzo*

**Sharon Panozzo** - September 25, 2018 at 12:16 PM

MD

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Mary Ann Narve Denney - September 24, 2018 at 11:21 PM

MD

*My Aunt Grace giving guidance to her grandnephew Lucas nearly 20 years ago. She is beginning counseling on college selection, something she helped complete 18 years later.*

Mary Ann Narve Denney - September 24, 2018 at 11:24 PM

GR

“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



Grace - September 22, 2018 at 07:45 PM

MB

“ *I went to high school at the same time as Mrs. Bydalek was there. I will always remember her as a member of the Three Musketeers along with Dan Liddell and Ken Bade (who dies two days after Grace). She was always a positive and supportive influence on me as a high school student and later in life whenever I would meet her. A great person as they all were.*

Max Brigham - September 22, 2018 at 01:26 PM

TV

“ Tina Kiger VanVleck lit a candle in memory of Grace Marion Bydalek



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**Tina Kiger VanVleck** - September 21, 2018 at 08:59 PM

DH

“ Grace directed me in the musical "Oklahoma" in 1964. To this day it is probably the best play ever produced at Kankakee High School. We were asked to perform three additional nights and talent scouts from Chicago came to see the play. Thank you Grace for being a part of my life and for all the dedicated years you gave to so many students.

*Denny Hoffman, Class of 1964*

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**Denny Hoffman** - September 21, 2018 at 06:04 PM

JP

“ I didn't know Grace, but I was a close friend of Dick Schoon, and know the positive effect she had on someone who needed a friend. Rest in peace.

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**Jim Puswaskis** - September 21, 2018 at 06:00 PM

SM

“ So sorry for your loss. I am so thankful to have had her for four years in the Kankakee High Schools as my director in the four Musicals I was part of. I am truly grateful for her guidance and direction.

*I know she touched the lives of many and will be greatly missed!  
So many great memories! Thank you!*

*Shawn "Shade" Marcotte*

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**shawn marcotte** - September 21, 2018 at 05:32 PM

GB

“ Wow - so many interesting things that I did not know about Aunt Grace (or should I say Aunt Grace's Aunt Grace as I referred to her when talking about her to my daughter). I am so proud that I was able to know her and to call her a friend and to be part of her "family". My prayers go out to the family and she will be dearly missed.

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**Gay Bowlin** - September 21, 2018 at 03:55 PM

DA

*So sorry for your loss. What a grand lady. God bless. Debra Aleksick Arnett*

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**Debra Arnett** - September 21, 2018 at 06:01 PM

GA

“ 1 file added to the album *New Album Name*



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**Grace's niece - Mary Ann** - September 21, 2018 at 03:10 PM

GA

“ 1 file added to the album New Album Name



Grace's niece - Mary Ann - September 21, 2018 at 03:09 PM

GA

“ 1 file added to the album New Album Name



Grace's niece - Mary Ann - September 21, 2018 at 03:08 PM

MB

“ Ms Bydalek was a mentor and coach for my theater aspirations. I spent lots of time with her doing high school musicals and loved her spunk and dedication. What a full life she led! A blessing to her students and others worked with her. Rest In Peace, classy Ms Grace.

martha rapier bloomquist - September 21, 2018 at 02:05 PM

PP

“ The best teacher!



Pamela Gound Pilbeam - September 21, 2018 at 01:54 PM

AT

“ *She encouraged me to attend college.  
Something I considered not doing. Can't thank her enough for her  
guidance  
A great lady*

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**Ann Tucker** - September 20, 2018 at 07:38 PM

AB

“ *She used to get very upset with me for not following her instruction.  
The disagreements turned into a life changing turnaround. Thank  
you Grace. Bill Bierman*

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**Arthur Bierman** - September 20, 2018 at 06:22 PM

LC

“ *She was a great woman*

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**Laura cook** - September 20, 2018 at 05:25 PM

JO

“ *Ms Bydalek was my high school counselor who touched my life  
tremendously! I know why she was named "Grace" because she  
was full of grace! She was my idol! Johnnie Mae Whitson Dandridge*

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**Johnnie** - September 20, 2018 at 05:01 PM



“ *Those of us who had the blessing of her wisdom have lived better  
lives because of our being her students. RIP, Miss Bydalek.*

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**Bob Schneider** - September 20, 2018 at 03:54 PM

JS

*Ms. Bydaek was my favorite high school teacher. She directed us in the Junior Class play. During the performance, I mess-up really badly in an early scene and somehow skipped 32 pages of dialogue, throwing off and confusing the rest of the cast. But at the end of that scene, Ms. Bydalek and another cast member came to my rescue. They figured out how to smoothly re-insert the 32 pages of dialogue and action that I had skipped. It worked. The reviewer from The Journal had no idea that I had made such a monumental mistake and that I had almost totally ruined the performance. In fact, we got a great review from The Journal. Ms. Bydalek saved my fragile ego from a huge embarrassment. I will be forever grateful for her patience, kindness, and unwavering support. She was the best!! Jim Sollo, class of 1962.*

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**Jim Sollo** - September 21, 2018 at 07:46 PM