



Marion Laurretta (Rita) Coley

May 7, 1946 - March 8, 2026

On Sunday evening, March 8, 2026, long-time Ephrata, Washington, resident Marion Laurretta (Rita) Coley passed away peacefully at the Confluence Health Hospital in Wenatchee. She was 79 years old.

Rita was born May 7, 1946, in Monroe, Louisiana. She was the second child of six children born to Marion Lawernce and Barbara Lucille (Wade) Simmons.

At the tender age of 10 years old, and with the permission of her parents, she followed the lead of her maternal grandparents and her big sister, Jeanie, and was baptized a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. For the remainder of her life, she grew strong in her faith, became very learned in the gospel, and never faltered in following in the footsteps of Jesus Christ. Early in her life, she exhibited an extraordinary faculty for memorizing short poems and other childhood sayings that she could quote verbatim until she passed.

Rita graduated from high school in the top 10 percent of her class in 1964. She played the violin and even traveled once by school bus with her school band to Asheville, North Carolina. There she participated in a multi-school

concert. Gifted intellectually with an excellent proficiency with the English Language, she excelled in creative writing and was fascinated with her ability to write poetry.

Rita was sealed for time-and-eternity to Mickey T. Wright on December 29, 1966, in the Salt Lake Temple in Salt Lake City, Utah. She and Mickey had six children: Cynthia Yvette Bradford (Joe), Stephen Todd Wright (Jessica), Ronald Jared Wright (Chrystal), Nathan Kurtis Wright (Suzanne), Alisa Nicole Flores (Daniel), and Jennifer Lynette Morrill (Eldon).

Her husband, Mickey, died in February 2005 at the young age of sixty. In November of 2006, Rita married her long-ago teenage sweetheart, William E. (Bill) Coley, with whom she lived for nineteen years until her passing. With his encouragement and

help, Rita gathered all her poetry together and had it self-published into a book entitled, "Trailing Clouds of Glory." In this way, all her creative works of poetry have been assembled into one place for friends and posterity to enjoy.

Rita was preceded in death by her parents and her older sister, Jeanie Tolbird (Paul). She is survived by four siblings: Yvonne Lee (Peter), Elaine Rademaker (Cliff), Wade Simmons, and Marlene Simmons. She is also survived by her six children, one step-daughter, twenty-seven grandchildren, nine step-grandchildren, and fifteen great-grandchildren.

She was indeed one-of-a-kind, and she will be sorely missed by all who knew and loved her.

Rita's funeral will be in Ephrata at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on Saturday, March 14, 2026. The church is located at 1301 Division Ave E. Viewing will begin at noon and last until 12:45 pm. The funeral ceremony will commence at 1:00 pm. Interment will immediately follow at the Ephrata Cemetery.

In lieu of sending flowers, those who wish may donate to the American Heart Association.

Previous Events

Viewing

MAR 14. 12:00 PM (PT)

Church of Jesus Christ of Lds
1301 E Division
Ephrata, WA 98823

Service

MAR 14. 1:00 PM (PT)

Church of Jesus Christ of Lds
1301 E Division
Ephrata, WA 98823

Interment will immediately follow at the Ephrata Cemetery.

Tribute Wall

RS

“ *Rita used to be my visiting teacher .she was a wonderful sis and friend .your family is in our thoughts and prayers love Robin*

Robin Smith - March 15 at 01:15 AM

EN

“ *We are saddened at the passing of Rita. We hope that Bill and the family will find calm and peace as you navigate this tender time. Our prayers and thoughts are with you. We have loved and enjoyed our friendship with Rita. She has always been the nicest of ladies. We have great regard for her and Bill. She is a wonderful example of a truly good person. We always loved her poetry and her way with words.*

Love from Dave and Ellen Nelson

Ellen Nelson - March 14 at 09:43 PM