

Diane Jonelle Roos, 65

Sept. 15, 1953 - Sept. 29, 2018

DES MOINES - Diane Jonelle (Carroll) Roos, my wife of 41 years and an avid reader of newspaper obituary columns, requested in no uncertain terms that her obituary clearly state the cause of death.

In the early morning hours of Saturday, Sept. 29, 2018, Diane took her last breath because ovarian cancer had sapped her of her last ounce of physical strength. She passed away at our home in Polk City just as she had



wanted. This was some small measure of consolation to a family heart-broken by all the suffering they witnessed. But Diane endured it with an inner strength that the cancer couldn't reach. Of course, she had also wanted to live many years longer than the age of 65, a milestone that she reached on Sept. 15th. At her birthday celebration, she and I were surrounded by our three sons, three daughters-in-law and 10 grandchildren. This made Diane very happy, even though her health had declined to the point that she was able to take only one bite of her birthday cake.

Diane's life — a testament to fortitude, commitment and love — calls for continued celebration. God has already wiped her tears away — no more pain, no more sorrow. Permit me as her husband, Jonathan Roos, to tell you how her life began. On Sept. 15, 1953, the first of four children of Wilbur and Dorothy Ann (Schultz) Carroll was born in Harlan. Diane pitched in at an early age to help her parents on their Shelby County farm.

"I am proud to be an Iowa farm girl, but all the work I did on the farm was more than a labor of love," Diane wrote in a memoir about her childhood. "I was doing chores from the age of five. I did much of the housework, while Mother was helping Dad in the fields, at the age of eight. I supervised my younger sister and two younger brothers. My parents scrimped and saved to buy the 240-acre farm my father called 'Poverty Acres.' That required me to make sacrifices as well ... I had no choice but to grow up quickly on the farm."

Diane recalled driving a tractor at the age of eight, and cooking family meals and sewing her own clothes by age 10. "Nearly all the food we put on the table came from the farm and I had a hand getting that food to the table. I gathered the eggs and helped milk the cows. I plucked the feathers and cut the carcasses of the chickens we ate ... I wish I'd had more time to enjoy my childhood. But I did learn valuable skills and met the challenge that my Dad summed up this way: 'Anyone can do easy things! We like them tough.'"

Diane excelled in 4-H during her teen years. In recognition of her dairy foods projects, she received a national award that included a week-long, expenses-paid trip to Chicago in 1971.

That same year Diane graduated from AvoHa High school in nearby Avoca. She played a variety of musical instruments, including the bassoon in concert band and the bell lyre and cymbals in marching band. She was also very active in her church, Trinity Lutheran.

Diane continued her education at Northwest Missouri State University, Maryville, where she laid the groundwork for a decades-long career in teaching at the elementary school level with a bachelor's degree in education and a master's degree in reading and mathematics.

In the fall of 1976, Diane took a job in the Cherokee (Iowa) School District as a fifth and sixth grade reading instructor. That's where she met me, a rookie newspaper reporter employed by the Cherokee Daily Times. Our first formal date doubled as a work assignment for me. I invited her to go along with me to a campaign rally in Sioux City for Democratic vice presidential candidate Walter Mondale. While an admittedly cheap date, that campaign event helped launch our long, happy marriage.

We were married on February 12, 1977 — Lincoln's Birthday — at Trinity Lutheran Church in Avoca. I was 25; she was 23.

Diane's teaching career moved in tandem with mine, from Cherokee to Waterloo in 1978 and then on to Des Moines in 1979. Over 30 years she taught hundreds of Des Moines children while raising three sons of her own. Ethan was born in 1979 in Waterloo. His younger brothers were born in Des Moines: Aaron in 1981 and Adam in 1982.

In her various teaching positions — Title I reading, reading recovery, kindergarten, first and third grades — Diane tried hard to help her stu-