



Mary Elizabeth “Beth” Vowan Dowdy

1952-2025

Mary Elizabeth "Beth" Vowan Dowdy passed in the presence of her loved ones on September 7, 2025, after a lengthy battle with breast cancer. A woman of great conviction, she never feared death, knowing she was going to a better place and would be pain-free at the feet of The Good Shepherd.

The eldest of three daughters, Beth was born to Mary Ann and Benjamin H. Vowan, Jr. on October 17, 1952 in Dallas. In her youth, she participated actively in St. Michael's and All Angels Episcopal Church and attended Camp Crucis. In 1970, Beth graduated from W.T. White High School, where she was a member of the Caballeras drill team. Prior to high school, Beth spent two glorious years living at Collinsbrook, the family farm in Prosper, where she reared lambs and sold their wool to buy sewing patterns. A 5th-generation Texan, she served as the 1969-70 Shorthorn Lassie Princess at the Fort Worth Fat Stock Show before moving to Austin for college.

Beth earned her B.S. in education at The University of Texas in 1974. To her mother's delight, she was a member of Zeta Tau Alpha, serving as Rush Captain and participating actively in the chapter's Bridge Club. Beloved by many, Beth was tapped as a "Bored Martyr", Sig Ep Golden Heart, and ATO Little Sister of the Maltese Cross despite eventually marrying a gentleman from the Kappa Alpha Order, Trey Dowdy, whom she met in high school but were "just friends" until her senior year of college.

Beth and Trey were married at St. Michael's in Dallas on December 27, 1974, and began their newlywed years in Austin while Trey finished law school. Beth supported her husband by working for the Railroad Commission as Judge Jim Langdon's personal assistant. Upon graduation from UT Law, Trey accepted a job as an Assistant District Attorney in Dallas County in 1976, which was a paycut compared to Beth's job at the Railroad Commission. Beth began her teaching career that year in Garland, but left the education field shortly after to be more present as a mother to her three children: Emily, Will, and Meg. She instilled in them a love of reading and impressed them with her extensive vocabulary up until her dying days.

Beth was often the first on the dance floor at a party, she never met a stranger, and she became a kid again while swimming at the beach. Beth was a woman of many gifts and abilities: she was an accomplished seamstress, an industrious woodworker, and a gracious hostess, but her greatest talent was that of being a mother. She shuttled her kids to various recitals, games, and performances and was always their loudest and most exuberant cheerleader.

Though born and raised Episcopalian (a fact she would not let her family forget), Beth was a longtime member of Highland Park Presbyterian Church. She worked for over a decade in Congregational Care, served as a Sunday School teacher and deacon, participated on the Cuba mission trip team, and, up until her illness befell her, could be seen seated in the front pew every Sunday to worship.

She is survived by her husband of 50 years, William C. "Trey" Dowdy, III, children Emily Bush of Austin, Will (Dana) Dowdy of Dallas, and Meg Dowdy of Austin. She doted on her seven grandchildren, Woody, Chevy, Lexi, Wilson, Elden, Webb, and Emme, who fittingly called her "Lovie". She is also survived by her sisters Martha (Dale) Henry of Mason, TX, and Charlotte (Wade) Vowan-Wiles of Dallas, brother-in-law Dan (Kathy) Dowdy of Amarillo, sister-in-law Jill Dowdy of Dallas, nieces, nephews, and many members of the Happy Family Circle.

The family would like to thank the nurses, aides, and staff at T. Boone Pickens Hospice who helped Beth live her final days in comfort. A memorial service for Beth will be held on Thursday, September 18 at 2:00 pm in the sanctuary of Highland Park Presbyterian Church with Rev. Joe Rightmyer officiating. In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to the Dallas 24-Hour Club (4636 Ross St. Dallas, TX 75204) or Highland Park Presbyterian Church (3821 University Blvd. Dallas, TX 75205).

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