

In Loving Memory

Eleanor was born November 25, 1921, on a farm near Woonsocket, SD to Earl and Marian Payne Stegeberg. When Eleanor and her twin sister, Ila, were 11 years old, their mother died, leaving them to help their father raise their younger sister, Phyllis. She attended school in Woonsocket, SD and graduated in 1940, as salutatorian. Following graduation she attended Dakota Wesleyan University in Mitchell, SD where she met her future husband George McGovern. She worked as a legal secretary for Herbert Hitchcock and Fred Nichol in Mitchell, SD.

On October 31, 1943 she married George McGovern at the Woonsocket Methodist Church where George's father, a minister, officiated. They raised five children. During their married life Eleanor and her husband lived in Mitchell, SD, Washington, DC, Stevensville, MT, Rome, Italy and traveled widely.

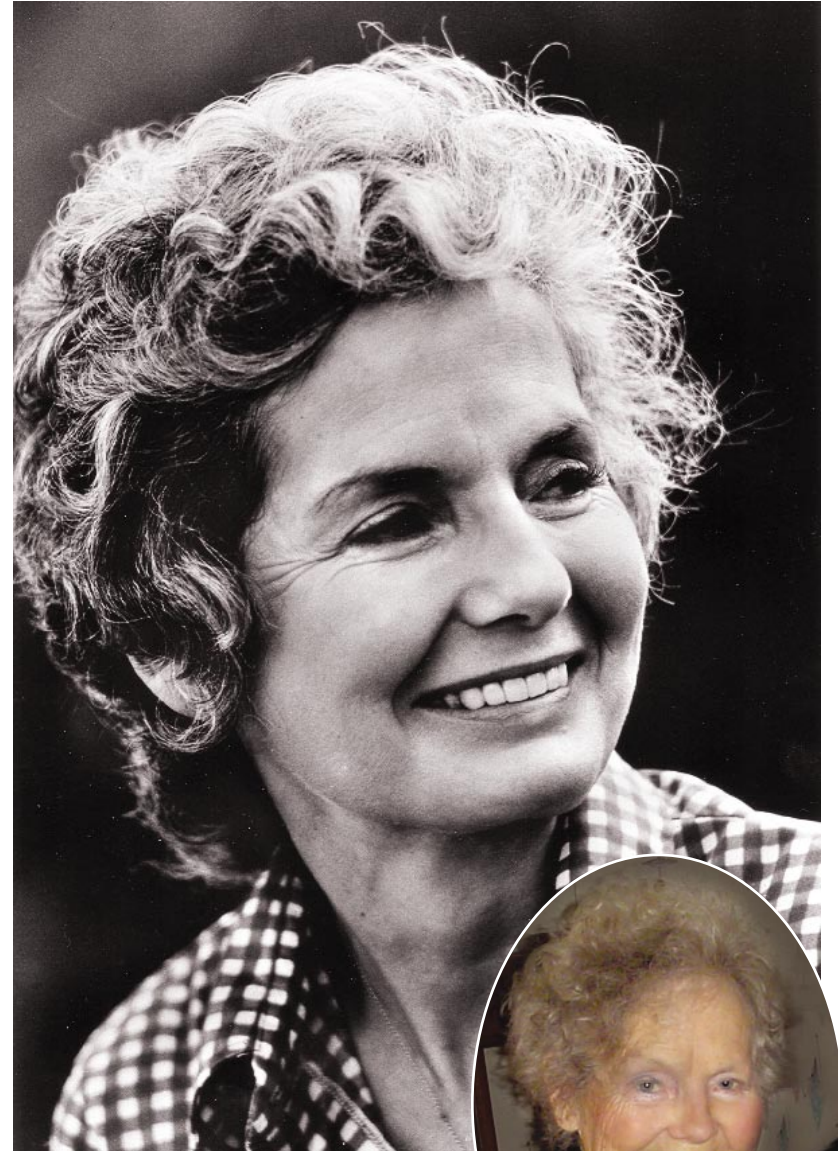
Eleanor campaigned for her husband, in elections to the US House of Representatives, the US Senate and again when he won the democratic presidential nomination in 1972; winning 11 state primaries including South Dakota and the two largest states, New York and California, before a loss to President Nixon. Frequently Eleanor discussed national and international issues in the media. Following that time, she addressed civic, academic and women's groups as an advocate for children, family life and the roles of women. She wrote articles and gave interviews on many issues, including alcoholism. She wrote her memoir, Uphill: A Personal Journey, in 1974. Her activities included being a board member for Dakota Wesleyan University, The Psychiatric Institute Foundation, The Child Study Association, The Erickson Institute of Chicago and Odyssey House of New York and Eleanor also enjoyed being a volunteer for the Child Development Center. She was an active participant in the Martha Movement and helped establish the McGovern Family Foundation for research on alcoholism. She loved nature and was a voracious reader.

She is survived by her husband George, four children: Ann McGovern, Stevensville, MT; Susan McGovern and husband James Rowen, Milwaukee, WI; Steven McGovern, Madison, WI; Mary McGovern-McKinnon, London, England; ten grandchildren: Timothy Mead, Kevin Mead, Bryan Wilson, Matthew McGovern-Rowen, Sam Rowen, Marian Frey-McGovern, Colleen Frey-McGovern, Caroline McKinnon, A.D. McKinnon, Aubrey McKinnon; six great grandchildren: Darien Mead, Derek Mead, Leo Rowen, Cooper Rowen, Wilbur Mead, Conner McGlauflin; a sister Phyllis Riffe, Jamestown, ND; and many nieces and nephews; also her beloved pets, Ursa and Kitty-cat.

Eleanor McGovern died of heart failure at her home in Mitchell, SD early Thursday morning, January 25, 2007 at the age of 85.

She was preceded in death by her parents; her daughter Teresa in 1994; and her twin sister, Ila, in 1996.

Funeral services will be at 2:00 p.m. Saturday, at the First United Methodist Church, Mitchell, SD, with a private burial at Graceland Cemetery, Mitchell, SD. Visitation will be Friday, January 26, 2007, 6-8 p.m. at the First United Methodist Church, Mitchell, SD. Memorials may be directed to The George and Eleanor McGovern Library and Center for Leadership and Public Service, Doctors Without Borders, or the SD Animal Welfare League. Arrangements are under the direction of Bittner Funeral Chapel.



Eleanor 1972

December, 2006

Eleanor McGovern

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF
Eleanor McGovern

November 25, 1921
Woonsocket, South Dakota

January 25, 2007
Mitchell, South Dakota

Officiant — Pastor Hank Kor
Organist — Lorna Braught
Soloist — Susan Almjeld

“I think what most people came to realize about Eleanor is how committed and how passionate she was. She shared George McGovern’s deep passion for progressive public policy and for many of the great issues of the day that you heard him espouse. You could talk with her directly and be every bit as moved by her passion as you would be by his.”

~ Tom Daschle



“I was determined to help with George’s career, not only by taking responsibility for the family, but by contributing ideas...

*In fact, I never considered it
George’s career – it was ours.”*

~ *Eleanor McGovern*
from “Uphill: A Personal Journey”,
her 1974 memoir

ORDER OF SERVICE

GATHERING

THE WORD OF GRACE

GREETING

HYMN “In the Garden” #314

PRAYER Rev. Harold Brady

SOLO “Amazing Grace”

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON Romans 8: selected

WITNESS & REFLECTION Congressman Jim McGovern et al

HYMN “Shall We Gather at the River” #723

MESSAGE Rev. Roger Fredrikson
Sioux Falls, SD

SOLO “He Shall Feed His Flocks”

FAMILY REFLECTION George McGovern

COMMENDATION & THANKSGIVING

LORD’S PRAYER

BENEDICTION Dr. Robert Duffett, President
Dakota Wesleyan University

HYMN “Spirit Song” #347

PALLBEARERS Eleanor’s Grandchildren

Timothy Mead

Kevin Mead

Bryan Wilson

Matthew McGovern-Rowen

Sam Rowen

Marian Frey-McGovern

Colleen Frey-McGovern

Caroline McKinnon

A.D. McKinnon

Aubrey McKinnon