



## Francis, Elizabeth

December 7, 2011

Francis, Elizabeth R., age 91, of Robin Drive, New Martinsville, WV, died Wednesday, December 7, 2011 at Wetzel County Hospital in New Martinsville.

Mrs. Francis was born September 10, 1920 in Clarksburg, WV, the daughter of the late J. Ransel and Virginia Snider Romine.

She was educated at West Virginia and Penn State Universities, achieving the degree of Master of Music Education in 1963. She taught choral music and Music Theater in the Harrison and Wetzel County public schools for over 33 years. She retired from public school teaching in 1992 but continued to produce musical theater productions until 2009.

In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband, Jack S. Francis in 2010; and her brother, John R. Romine Jr.

Survivors include two sons, Michael S. (Liu) Francis of New York, NY and John M. (Terry) Francis of Salisbury, NC; a sister, Ann R. Yoke of Clarksburg; a granddaughter, Jennifer F. McNally of Morgantown, WV; and a great granddaughter, Reese E. Alkire of Morgantown.

A memorial reception is planned for Saturday, December 17, 2011 from 2-5 p.m. at Grisell Funeral Home & Crematory, 751 Third Street, New Martinsville.

Memorial donations may be made to the Lincoln Theater, 197 Main Street, New Martinsville, WV 26155.

# Tribute Wall

G.

“ I am so sorry for your loss. May "the God of all comfort" (2 Corinthians 1:3,4) comfort and soothe your heart. His promises, found in the Holy Scriptures, can offer much hope. It assures us at John 5:28,29 that our loved ones will be remembered and brought back to life in the resurrection. Please allow God's Word to strengthen you and help you to endure this most difficult time.

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**G.Ford** - June 06, 2012 at 07:35 PM

JE

“ Dear Mike, John, Jennifer, Ann, and family,I was so sorry to hear of Libby's passing, and regret not being able to come to New Martinsville to visit with you. Libby was an inspiration to all, and like family to us, and she will be fondly remembered by all who knew her.Our deepest sympathies,Jae, Colette, and Brittany Eakin

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**Jae Eakin** - January 08, 2012 at 01:58 PM

JC

“ My sympathies to the Francis family. I had Mrs. Francis in school and I have very fond memories of her. She left a legacy!

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**Jeff Cook** - December 22, 2011 at 11:03 AM

EG

“ Dear John, you probably don't remember me, but, when you were stationed at Ft. Hamilton Army Base,and i worked there, you and I became friends. I remember even then that you had the most wonderful things to say about your mom and that really impressed me! I am sorry for your loss, but, her memory shall live on forever! Take care and maybe you could email me and let me know how you are doing after all these years! Eva Gregoire

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**Eva Gregoire** - December 20, 2011 at 02:07 PM

TE

“ My sister, Dorothy Blair, my son, Gene Elie, and I send our sincere condolences to the family of Elizabeth Francis. John Francis is my son in law. We did not know Elizabeth well but have heard many nice things about her and the great works she has accomplished in New Martinsville. I know she will be missed by all who knew and loved her. *Thelma Elie, Gene Elie, Dorothy Blair*Salisbury, NC

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**Thelma Elie** - December 19, 2011 at 10:39 AM

BA

“ To Libby's Family - Some of my earliest memories are of all of us (Mike, John, Rick, and our Moms) going to Bruce Pool everyday in the summer. Libby used to bounce me on the ropes in the pool and sing "She has rings on her fingers and bells on her toes". Love, thoughts and prayers to you all.

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**Becky Blair Allen** - December 17, 2011 at 07:25 PM

JF

“ Mike and John, please accept my sincere sympathy in the loss of your mother. Thank you for sharing her with New Martinsville over these many years. She was such a force in my life. I have used music in every part of my life, both personally and in my career. She will be missed, but thousands of us have become who we are due to her influence. God bless you.

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**Judy Jolliffe Fox** - December 16, 2011 at 04:50 PM

AW

“ Michael and John, my sincerest condolences on your mother's passing. It is obvious to me that she was a wonderful person, even though I did not know her. My thoughts are with you. *Andy*

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**Andy Wilkins** - December 15, 2011 at 05:49 PM

ML

“ Terry and John, I have been thinking of you and your family and sincerely hope you are all doing well. John's Mother sounds like a wonderful lady...and, perhaps a bit ahead of the time for women! And, it appears she made some great memories with friends and family. God Bless You All!Marie

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**Marie Leonard-Hartsell** - December 15, 2011 at 05:18 PM

JL

“ Mike and John, I started singing with your mom at ST Johns...then grade school...then high school..even now as a facilitator in our church I still use what she taught me. Scripture tells us we will all have jobs in Heaven so I'm so looking forward to singing with her there too. I'm sure she will still have things to share with all of her students

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**Jo Alice May Lorenz** - December 15, 2011 at 04:30 PM

JM

“ To all who have taken time to communicate your warm sentiments and notable memories about my grandmother, I thank you. I, of course, knew "Libby" from a very different perspective than most of you — as the matriarch of the paternal side of my family. She offered me an alternative female role model, one who was unafraid to be who she was with boldness and, in doing so, has obviously inspired many people to be a better version of themselves. I take it as the highest compliment when I am told by those who know me well that I am just like her in many ways. How lucky I was to have won the grandmother lottery. I will miss her laughter and her quirky perspectives, but I know that she lives in me and in all of you now. Thank you all.Jennifer Francis McNally

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**Jennifer Francis McNally** - December 15, 2011 at 03:31 PM

JT

“ Dear John, I regret that I will not be able to attend the reception due to work obligations in MI. I will be honoring Mrs. Francis from afar and keeping you and your family in my heart.

Jennifer Coffield Tobin - December 15, 2011 at 02:56 PM

BE

“ Terry and John, My thoughts and prayers have certainly been with you during these past few weeks. So glad you had the opportunity to be with her during her last days on this earth. I met her one time in the office and remember what a wonderful lady she was. Thinking of you and your family. Bonzie

Bonzie Everson - December 13, 2011 at 04:17 PM

DH

“ My sincere condolences to all of you at this very sad time. Please know that you are all in my prayers.

Diane Hunter - December 13, 2011 at 04:10 PM

LL

“ Michael and family, I know you have lost the beautiful rose in the flower garden of our life's journey!! Being around you some in life—her gift to you was the kind heart—sometimes hidden—use it often in her memory. My dear friend—may you have peace and grace in your lost.

Luther L. LaFon - December 13, 2011 at 09:57 AM

TF

“ I loved her too. She was a loving mother-in-law to me and I'm honored to have been in her life.

Terry Francis - December 12, 2011 at 05:40 PM

MH

“ John, Terry, I'm so very sorry to hear of the loss of your mother. It's grand that you could be there with her during the Thanksgiving holiday and that you'll be able to cherish that time along with all the other wonderful memories of times past. Blessings to each of you and yours. Martha

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**Martha Hawkins** - December 12, 2011 at 03:48 PM

BM

“ Jennifer and Family, I'm so sorry for the loss of your grandmother. May you cherish all of your memories. My thoughts and prayers are with you at this time. Brandi

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**Brandi Meighan** - December 12, 2011 at 03:05 PM

JF

“ To all who have sent such kind messages about our mother... We thank all of you for your sincere sentiments. Mother was a phenomenal teacher and meant so much to the lives of so many. My wife, Terry, brother, Mike and his wife, Liu and I hope we may see and visit with all of you at the reception in her honor on Saturday, December 17th. John Francis

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**John Francis** - December 10, 2011 at 05:30 PM

ML

“*There's one more angel in heaven, there's one more tear in my eye*”*To the Francis family: Your matriarch is gone in body but is ever so alive in spirit. The countless number of students who enjoyed their time with Libby continue to take the lessons of dedication, perfection, and most importantly her love of music and theater and instill that into new generations. I had the pleasure to work with her as a student at Magnolia and again as an adult in her post-retirement musical adventures. She never lost that desire to teach and expose a whole new generation to worlds and opportunities that they may have been afraid to see. Music director, theater director, founder, pioneer—Libby Francis was a gem among the rough. Her presence will be missed, but her legacy will live on. I want to wish your family peace through this trying time. Rest assured that Libby's flame will burn bright in the legacy that she left here and the community at large.*

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**Mark Lemasters** - December 10, 2011 at 01:55 PM

CB

“*A real treasure and honor to know and to have worked with Mrs. Francis. A true name to the Lincoln Theatre family. Thank you for all of the wonderful memories and theatre families she has created and been a part of. Heaven gained a wonderful new entertainer/dancer/singer/actress/and friend! May her blood, sweat, and tears never leave the stage.xoxo*

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**Chelsea Bush** - December 09, 2011 at 10:36 PM

DJ

“ Dear Mike and John, In my photo album, there's a picture of the All-City Boy's Chorus with me in about fourth grade, and there's your Mom. And, after several more, there's a picture of The King and I in my senior year, and there's your Mom. And every year between the two pictures was filled with such joy, sponsored by your Mom. She'll live in blessed memory. David Jolliffe

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**David Jolliffe** - December 09, 2011 at 07:50 PM

SG

“ Mike, John & Families, I'm sorry for your loss of your Mom. She gave so much to our school and to the community. She will be missed. Bob & I would see her when walking in the neighborhood and she would always comment on what a pretty dog I had! Bob & Sally Gerdes

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**Sally Gautschi Gerdes** - December 09, 2011 at 05:31 PM

J1

“ Elizabeth Francis gave me a place to sing during my junior & senior years; sometimes as a bass, or as a baritone; and maybe a tenor, in a pinch. I enjoyed every minute of it even as a music sight reader. I regret that I used what she taught me only a few times after leaving MHS, but she inspired many others to sing and carry on her spirit and excitement about music, and in them who continued to teach or sing, is her spirit and legacy that they carry forward. What a great gift to leave behind for us.

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**jim schaefer, 1961** - December 09, 2011 at 04:12 PM

BB

“ Dear Mike, John and families, So sorry to hear of the passing of Libby. She was a fine lady and will be sadly missed. Our thoughts and prayers are with you. Bill & Linda Barth

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**Bill Barth** - December 09, 2011 at 03:58 PM

CS

“ We are so saddened that our dear friend Libby has gone from us. We will always treasure the memories we shared, especially the days I enjoyed bridge with her and Coleman's trips with her Christmas tree. We were blessed to be part of her many friends — a special lady. I am sorry we can't be there for her memorial, but we are in Texas with Coleman's mother who is very ill.

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**Coleman and Donette Street** - December 09, 2011 at 03:52 PM

LH

“ We are very sorry for your loss, Mike and John. Your mother was one of the great ones of New Martinsville and will be missed very much. I once saw her exiting the movie "101 Dalmations" which she had attended alone, and she remarked to me "I just love a good dog movie." Her love of life, music, family and dogs lives on in memories we share.

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**Linda Parish Hill** - December 09, 2011 at 03:33 PM

MF

“ David, I don't imagine I will be able to answer, on an individual basis, all of the kind and generous expressions that have been offered by so many of Libby's former students, both on various f/b pages and on the Grissel site — there have been so many, and it is difficult to know exactly what to say to so many people whom I never knew, but I wanted to say something to you. When I saw the comment that you made the morning after mother died regarding her passing, the terrible sadness I was experiencing at that moment began to abate. Since then, I have been marveling, and I have been gratified at the volume and seeming sincerity of the many kind things that are being said about her. It is obvious to me that my own sentiments regarding Libby were roundly shared by many others: she was the 'sweetest peach on the tree'. Thank you for your moving words. Michael Francis

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**Michael Francis** - December 09, 2011 at 03:27 PM

TL

“ Mrs. Francis had a huge impact on my life. I was in several musicals of hers in the early 80's. "Show Choirs" started to take off then and she was way ahead of the curve. She's a major reason I became a music teacher. She taught me musicianship. It was evident she was passionate about music and sharing her passion with others for generations was such a gift. Her legacy will carry on and touch lives of people she will never know.

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**Tracy LeMasters** - December 09, 2011 at 01:53 PM

CH

“ *What a great lady; conspiring with my mother to get me involved in singing and novice acting! (she personally admitted to this 35 years after the fact!) Her passion for music still motivates me to sing in church, or in the car! All the while, teaching me at a young age, that there was always time for fun after the accomplished task. Libby was a fine lady!*

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**Chuck Herrick** - December 09, 2011 at 12:59 PM

JS

“ *Your mother was an inspiration to me. I owe so much to her as a part of the person I am today. She inspired me to continue with my music throughout life. So many wonderful memories I cherish working with her.*

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**Jo Ellen Stewart Snider** - December 09, 2011 at 09:48 AM

BG

“ *What a true gem your mom was! Her passion for the Theater helped to open my eyes to a whole new world. Our community was truly blessed to have such a wonderful leading lady. I will miss her early morning phone calls. Bev Gibb*

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**Beverly Gibb** - December 09, 2011 at 09:11 AM

LM

“ *My sympathy to the Francis family and the Lincoln Theater family. Because of Mrs. Francis, the joy of performing on a live stage is a gift that blesses my life still today. Of everything she taught me, I shall always remember her fondly saying "Sing the thing!". Thanks to the fairest lady of them all.*

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**Larry Martin** - December 08, 2011 at 08:20 PM

TI

“ My deepest condolences to the Francis families. Of course I had Mrs. Francis as a music teacher at Magnolia High School as did countless others. She was an inspiration to one and all. I was on the clothing design team when she produced "The Boyfriend" and it was a terrific experience for me. I'll never forget...never. Tish Davis Ice MHS '73

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**Tish Ice** - December 08, 2011 at 06:10 PM

BA

“ Francis family, I was so sorry to hear of Libby's passing the world of Art has lost a true supporter. I was lucky to pass through the doors of this Great Teacher Libby Francis, both in choir and musicals. They are indeed my favorite times in school, and I can never repay the great gifts Libby shared with me.

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**Bob Athey** - December 08, 2011 at 06:07 PM

JT

“ Dear Mike and John, What a joy your mother has been to this world! She gave so much to so many! I have to smile and say - she was our Mame - and taught us that "Life IS a banquet..." So many great memories and accomplishments . Peace and love to you and your family.

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**Jennifer Coffield Tobin** - December 08, 2011 at 06:07 PM

SS

“ Francis family, It was such a joy to work with Libby on the Lincoln Theater Board...she truly loved what she did and did it perfectly... will always remember the beauty she brought to the theater. Deepest sympathy to the family... Sandi Slie

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**Sandi Slie** - December 08, 2011 at 04:37 PM

TB

“ Mike, Jennifer and John, I am so very sorry to hear of Libby's passing. One of my favorite memories is of a trip I made with her to New York when I was a high school senior—we abandoned the rest of the group one afternoon and she took me to St. Pat's, Macy's and the Met after the Christmas show at Radio City Music Hall. She brought so much music to so many; she will be terribly missed.

Tammy Baker - December 08, 2011 at 03:07 PM

ER

“ What wonderful memories I have of growing up on Fourth Street and across the street from the Francis household. What a wonderful role model and accomplished artist she was for many people in New Martinsville, especially her students. Please know that all of the Francis family is in our thoughts and prayers. Bob and Ellen

Ellen Heiskell Robinson - December 08, 2011 at 02:57 PM

JL

“ My deepest sympathy to the family. I will miss her, she helped in all the recitals when I was a child and any musical and choir event that happened in the school district. I was truly blessed having her as a teacher she was a honest person, she taught me alot. I am thankful to her for showing me the right path. I will miss you Libby. God bless the family.

Joanne Jackson Luppe - December 08, 2011 at 02:33 PM

LW

“ My deepest sympathy to you, Mike and John, and all your family. I have many fond memories of your mother from the time she directed our children's choirs at St. John's Methodist.

Linda Lasure Williams - December 08, 2011 at 12:08 PM

DH

“ I was in Libby's choir at Magnolia and in her 1979(?) production of "Guys and Dolls". I still know the words to the songs today and find myself singing them from time to time. Absolutely one of my fondest high school memories. She was a true professional. How blessed we were to have someone with her passion and talent in our community. So thankful that she chose to share those gifts with us.

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**Debbie Herrick** - December 08, 2011 at 12:05 PM

ME

“ Michael & John, I worked with your mom on several Lincoln Theatre productions, and it was always a joy. "La Libby" will be missed by many. Sincerely, Michelle Estep

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**Michelle Estep** - December 08, 2011 at 10:41 AM