Penny Crane
1937 - 1999

A tribute from her friends associated with
ACM SIGUCCS

March 7, 1999
Penny Crane was born December 17, 1937 in Copperhill, Tennessee.

She received a Bachelor's Degree from Emory and Henry College in 1959, and a Master's Degree (Mathematics) from the University of North Carolina in 1963.

From 1963 to 1968 she worked at Bell Laboratories, in Murray Hill, New Jersey.

She married Ted Crane on July 27, 1968.

From 1968 to 1974 she worked at the University of South Carolina.

Penny held various positions in computing and information technology at California State University from 1974 to 1995.

From 1995 through 1998 Penny taught Math and Computer Science courses at various college and university campuses in the Los Angeles area.

Penny was actively involved in the Association of Computing Machinery, Special Interest Group for University and College Computing Services (ACM SIGUCCS), from the mid-70's until her death. She served in many capacities for both ACM and SIGUCCS; she was board chair of SIGUCCS from 1986 to 1990.

Penny died at her home on January 3, 1999.


[Image]
MY FRIEND

What I loved about My Friend:

Her passion and compassion for the people and issues she cared deeply about....

Her simplicity in life and its relationships....

Her unwillingness to suffer fools gladly....

What I will miss about My Friend:

Her lilting accent as she told me a story (often from the very beginning)....

Her throaty laugh at one of my jokes....

Her ability to make me feel loved.

(A tribute to Penny by her husband Ted, read at her memorial service)
Thoughts about Penny Crane

I think of Penny often, and always visualize the vibrant person with her wonderful red hair tied back. Penny had one of the best senses of humor, and enjoyed telling funny stories, many about her mishaps. I fondly remember her talking about locking herself out of the hotel room and having to get the people at the front desk to let her back in. And, there were stories that weren’t really humorous, but that she also made light of. One was the time she was visiting a museum in New York and her wallet was stolen, so she trotted off to ACM to borrow some money!

As for most people who knew Penny, she was a mentor. She was a model for me as to how to work with volunteers. She provided the warm, welcoming atmosphere so that everyone felt that they could contribute. Penny believed that there were opportunities for everyone to get involved; just need to find the right job to do! And, Penny understood that with volunteers one has to give people the latitude to bring their own methods of doing things forward. This is one of the things that makes SIGUCCS so valuable, and it is a direct result of Penny’s way!

And, I also remember how Penny loved to shop. And, she took the opportunities of SIGUCCS meetings to enjoy shopping. She also loved to go to museums, particularly in New York City. I think that we talked about this one of the last times we talked on the phone.

I have found myself thinking "what would Penny have done" periodically when I encounter new and challenging opportunities. In the past, I could call Penny and talk to her about some of these things; now I need to rely on what Penny has taught me throughout the years.

We will all miss Penny and will continue to learn by remembering all that she stood for!

Jennifer Fajman, University of Maryland
My favorite Penny story ... one she told about herself, and always laughed about.

Penny arrived in Cleveland the day before the Fall User Services Conference (1992) was to start and directed her taxi to the hotel. When she attempted to check in, the hotel had no record of Penny Crane, not even a record of Penelope Crane! Penny was quite incensed. She told us that, after many minutes of argument with the hotel she finally decided to pull her "trump" card. Penny extracted from her purse her registration confirmation form, sent to her by the hotel, and placed it on the registration desk. Penny, in telling this story, always became contrite at this time. The hotel clerk, with perfect aplomb, looked at the form and said "Miss Crane, this confirmation form is for Stouffer's...this is the Hilton." Penny always admitted to being quite embarrassed, but the Hilton clerk took it all in stride. He ordered up the Hilton van and had Penny delivered to Stouffer's.

Terry Wolff, Pomona College

Penny and I loved to eat and to try different foods. At the Chicago SIGUCCS User Services Conference (1982) many years ago, we collected a group for an ethnic dinner and Penny and I decided that we would each order a different entree and then we would share. I had trouble choosing between two items. Penny was having the same problem and when we compared the two sets (Penny was a mathematician, so we always had to use set theory in these discussions) we found only a single menu item that was a member of both sets. What to do? We ordered the union of the sets and the two of us ate three entrees! A standard Penny and Bob event!

Bob Lutz, Drake University
I admired Penny for her willingness to say what was on her mind. She had a forthright honesty, tempered by a sense of humor and a penchant for fun. Penny was a natural leader and was quick to recognize this characteristic in others. Her outspokenness behind the scenes and at board meetings had a tremendous influence on the SIGUCCS organization because of the respect she generated among her colleagues. I was delighted when Penny enthusiastically agreed to address the first time attendees at a special orientation reception at SIGUCCS ’98 at Indiana University. Her now legendary advice on how to get the most from these annual fall conferences will remain part of SIGUCCS folklore for a long time to come!

Bonnie Hites, Indiana University

I noticed the announcement of Penny Crane’s passing on the list, and am saddened by the loss. Though I really only met Penny the one time in San Diego she made quite an impression, and I’ve always remembered her fondly. A remarkable woman.

Chris Hoover, University of South Dakota

I can’t think of Penny without remembering my first SIGUCCS at Reno (1984) and how welcome Penny made me feel as a newcomer. At that time I didn't realize the rare gift it was to get to know Penny that early in my “SIGUCCS career”. It always amazed me how truly interested Penny was in everyone and everything. The personal interest she showed in people - inquiring about specific events or family members following the interval of a year between conferences - endeared her to many. She was always surrounded by
people who wanted to share in the enthusiasm and wit that she sprinkled so liberally in her conversations. Can't you still hear her throaty laugh?

And the tales she told! Penny definitely didn't look at the world through rose-colored glasses. No, I think her's were psychedelic! She could see the bright side of every situation and had a talent for helping others do the same. She made SIGUCCS fun; she made us recognize the worth in what we are all doing in our everyday jobs.

Losing Penny leaves a "kicked in the stomach" feeling that won't pass quickly or easily. Special memories of a very special lady - I have those and I'm so grateful. Thank you, Penny, for being you. Thank you for sharing so much of yourself, so freely, with so many people.

Linda J. Hutchison, Central Missouri State University

Susan and I attended the inurnment and service for Penny Crane at the Forest Lawn Memorial Park in Hollywood Hills. It was Saturday, January 9 and a perfect day in Los Angeles.

There were people there from each time in Penny's life. The diversity gave evidence that Penny and her husband Ted never forgot friends. They stayed in contact even when friends became separated by time or distance. There was a woman who worked with Penny at Bell Labs, several of Ted's students from Univ. of North Carolina Chapel Hill days, personal friends and work friends. Besides Susan and I, SIGUCCS people included Linda Downing, Jerry Smith and Jerry's wife and son.

The name "Forest Lawn" is familiar as a piece of popular culture, but I had never been there before. It is a big place. We waited as a group for the funeral director to lead our car caravan to the right location.

Penny is in good company. As we got out of our cars and walked up, Ted pointed out the resting place of Bette Davis
and that of the Liberace family. Bette Davis' memorial says "She did it the hard way." Ted looked fine, but it is difficult to imagine the depth of his loss.

A minister conducted a short service and a friend spoke about Penny. I was hoping the audience would be invited to say something about Penny: "open mike" time. I guess we weren't because if we had started on "Penny" stories, we would have been there a long time.

After the quiet inurnment, we were invited to a reception on the patio of a local restaurant. It was an opportunity to talk to the people we did not know.

As conversation went around our table, we realized that none of us had ever been to the Gene Autry Museum or to a place called Noriega's in the hot Central Valley town of Bakersfield. Penny had these enthusiasms for places that might seem a bit quirky. But we all vowed that we would one day visit them because Penny said so.

Someone brought up a situation that took place at the start of Penny's service. Because of the way the crowd and the chairs for the family were arranged, some of us had no choice but to stand in back between the cemetery plots. We tried to avoid stepping on anyone's grave.

Fortunately the funeral director got us rearranged quickly. But the slightly sacrilegious scene of people having to tip-toe between graves to hear Penny's service...someone said that would have made the perfect "Penny" story and what fun she would have had telling it. And we all agreed to that.

Dennis & Susan Mar, Naval Postgraduate School and San Diego State University

Penny Crane's life touched mine from time to time in quiet yet enduring ways. Whether she was talking about serious work issues or sharing moments from a personal experience, Penny reached deeply, and helped make special
things happen. I still almost feel as if I had participated in a trip to Durango which she related, or that I have seen Ted rehearsing for a dramatic moment, or that I was at her side through a particularly difficult user services or management issue. Mostly, I got to see how well Penny worked with others at SIGUCCS and SAC. I got to see how things happened differently because of her energy but also because she brought a special spirit, humor, and caring to each activity from Board meetings to Birds of a Feather sessions, from coffee breaks to special events such as the SAC Rodeo. Penny smoked. In general I avoid smoke and smoking people but for some reason the fact that Penny took moments aside to smoke turned out to call me to her rather than send me away. I will continue to look for her, sitting in a hallway, on the hillside at Snowmass, at the table in difficult meetings. May we continue to benefit from the light she brought to us, her comfortable yet demanding outreach, and mostly her vibrant intellect that worked so well with ours while making us stretch.

Priscilla Jane Huston, Rice University

Penelope Crocket Crane

I met Penny while working on a system-wide computer procurement (California State University) for what was then referred to as the Central Timeshare Procurement. I was the campus rep from the Fullerton campus. My responsibilities included writing specs for several languages, and I was to work with Penny's officemate in this capacity. I would phone early in the morning. I always got Penny on the phone – not her office mate. I later discovered that this was a big joke for Penny and the staff. Her officemate was never there early as she had indicated to me.

A year later I took a job in the Chancellor's Office in the System-wide Division of Information Systems. Penny was one of three individuals who reported directly to me. On my arrival the other two (one was Penny's officemate) were overly solicitous; Penny was very cool toward me. She later
explained that anyone whom the other two thought so much of was probably not going to do well with her. She finally warmed toward me when she found out that I was a member of ACM and was planning to go to that year’s User Services Conference.

Penny eventually became my top staff member. She was a very good supervisor when the staff was behaving well -- which they usually were. She generally inspired loyalty. Penny really disliked unpleasantness. She used to say to me; “I let Ted (her husband) fire the maids and you fire the staff.” We allocated our dispositions properly to the task of supervision. Her most notable statement to the staff was “You are supposed to hang up the phone before you say ‘you dumb son-of-a-bitch’”.

Penny’s stories were always interesting. As a friend of the family mentioned at her memorial service: “She usually had to start at the beginning.” They certainly had a bit of the “Shaggy Dog,” but I was never sure that they had a beginning. I used to tell her that she would really like the programming language LISP since it followed her habit of nesting parenthetical expressions.

Penny and I became very close professionally. We both moonlighted teaching programming language courses. Penny was an excellent teacher. She used to tell me that the students thought she was funny. That may be true, but those that I have talked with adored her. When we finally both left the Chancellor’s Office, I returned to teaching at Fullerton and Penny joined me there as a part-time faculty member and shared my office. At the very end we were working on a couple of projects together. And we planned to help each other this spring. She was going to help me teach Visual Basic for my first time and I was to help her teach C++ for the first time. She was willing to take on challenges.

For the past several years my wife and I enjoyed vacationing with the Cranes and another couple in the Sierras. We enjoyed meals at each other’s homes and at some favorite Dim Sum restaurants. New adventures were usually Penny’s idea.
Penny was a unique individual. She was my good friend. I miss her very much.

Jim Hightower, California State University

The one that keeps coming to mind is Penny at a Snowmass I attended. It was rodeo night and it seems her husband had purchased for her a new BRIGHT red western-style shirt, and she had brand new RED cowgirl boots. She was so excited about getting dressed up for the occasion. She looked marvelous!

The other thing I remember about her isn't just one instance. I was a raw recruit to User Services when I met her, and more than a few times she listened while I ranted on issues which she had heard and worked with/survived for years. She gave me her attention, didn't blow me off, which would have been easy for other people, and always gave me good advice. She was always welcoming with people, all kinds of people. And yet, she had a steel to her that allowed her to work for as long as she did in a field which can be so frustrating. I will really miss her.

Cathy Flum, University of South Dakota

I chaired the Program Committee for the SIGUCCS User Services Conference in Montreal (back in 86!!). I remember Penny Crane coming into our "control central" room to lend her support to us as we struggled through the typical behind-the-scenes problems that I am sure plague every conference, (but go unnoticed by the attendees). She was
there to tell us stories about problems she had encountered in previous conferences; to help us laugh, and to provide the perfect amount of understanding that we needed. I will always remember her.

Sharon Richardson, Carleton University

The things I recall most about Penny were the stories she used to tell on herself, e.g. sleep walking into a hotel lobby in her nightgown. I think they would sound rather contrived in anybody else's words.

Tex Hull, SPSS, Inc.

Who is Penny Crane to me?

I don't remember exactly which of the past 13 SIGUCCS conferences it was that I was actually introduced to Penny, but I remember how it felt. First, let me say that my first SIGUCCS experience was in 1986 in Montreal. I was less than 6 months into a newly created Manager of User Services position (nobody here knew exactly what my job was supposed to be–least of all me), I was 6 months pregnant with my first child and my husband accompanied me on the trip (we made it into a vacation after the conference). It was absolutely magical. I was enchanted by whole scene, the gorgeous fall colors and cultural offerings of Montreal, the beautiful hotel accommodations, the exquisite food offered at the conference and surrounding eateries, but most of all, I fell in love with SIGUCCS. What an unbelievable group of people! Not only was I made to feel like "one of the gang" immediately, but everyone I spoke to knew exactly how I felt, and what I was facing in my job.
It was pretty easy to identify the major players of SIGUCCS. You know, the conference organizers, the officers, etc. Not only did they wear easy-to-identify-tags, but they gathered in quietly buzzing circles with their coffee and (optionally) cigarettes and packed agendas. Being a somewhat shy newcomer, I didn't attempt to broach the "circle" of these seemly important folks. At the same time, there was a distinct openess to their group. Once the opening session had occurred, my impression of these "high honchos" changed a bit.

My first and most enduring impression of Penny Crane is as the "matriarch of SIGUCCS." I know there were those before her, and since, serving in chair positions, etc., but, to me, Penny extolled the "motherhood" of the organization that I felt from no one else. In the opening session of my first conference (1986), she said to the crowd of almost 500, "To all the newcomers, please remember—you're not required to attend every session. And to all the old-timers—please try to attend at least one." Well, that meant a lot to me. To that statement alone I attribute the immense value I get out of each and every SIGUCCS I attend. Because I heard that, I was less afraid to join coffee break groups, bird of a feather, and, I was more comfortable with approaching some of the old-timers to catch their words of wisdom. And it wasn't long before I knew their names and they knew mine. Even Penny.

To me, Penny Crane is the personification of SIGUCCS. She is wise and knowing, comfortable and caring. She was, to me, a role model in a way that is distant and unknown, and at the same time familiar and sharing. I wish I had made more opportunities to learn from this wise woman. I know she would have graciously allowed me the benefit of her life experiences.

Meg Brady, University of Missouri, Rolla

Penny was instrumental in establishing User Services as a profession. Spreading the word to those institutions that
have not yet seen the light would be a good way of perpetuating her work and her memory.

Richard Nelson, Furman University

A woman unafraid to be warm, laid back, friendly, and always ready for fun. She understood the importance of this for her life and as the heart of user services and SIGUCCS. I would describe her as the perfect matriarch of SIGUCCS.

Diane Jung, Indiana University

There are some people who you feel will be immortal as a result of their personality. Penny certainly was one of them. SIGUCCS will never be the same without her.

Bruce Danner, Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology

"The rookies don't have to go to all the sessions, and the old guys have to go to at least one."

Margaret Baker, University of California, Berkeley

I don't know how others felt before their first visit to St. Louis but I remember having some intrepidity about not knowing anyone at the ACM SIGUCCS User Services Management Symposium. My fears were quickly laid to rest when I met Penny. I remember her "knowing" smile as she came up to me and introduced herself-- as only Penny can do. She made me feel immediately comfortable as though I had just sat
down in a recliner that had been someone’s favorite for many years. As I watched her mingle with the others in the room, it was clear to this newcomer that this lady had the respect and admiration of everyone she came in contact with. You could tell she had earned her stripes in the world of IT management and that she was comfortable with her station in life. Since that time, Penny’s was one of the faces I continued to look forward to seeing each March in St. Louis. And— as predictable as rain in the spring— she was always there. I will miss Penny.

Shirlee Moreland, University of Notre Dame

Memories - so many memories of Penny Crane

Penny was such a warm and engaging person and she always had a way of making people feel welcome at SIGUCCS. I too enjoyed this welcoming soul and Penny became a trusted colleague and a good friend over the years. When I first came to ACM - to the newly created position of Program Director - there were folks that were less than welcoming. They felt we were the hired spies, hired to be sure the SIGS didn’t spend their money the way they wanted to! Penny had NONE of these suspicions and she remained my advocate throughout the 7 years I worked with SIGUCCS...smoothing the way for a productive partnership to develop between the volunteer leaders and the staff.

Over the years Penny, along with many other wonderful folks at SIGUCCS, became my friend. If the two of us were in a city together we got together. I was in Los Angeles on a SIGCHI trip and I tacked on a couple of days so I could visit with Penny and Ted. I wanted to meet “the kitties” and see the wonderful view she talked about so much. While I had previously met Ted this was a real opportunity to get to know this guy Penny loved so much. We had a lovely time...we walked over to the market in their neighborhood and shopped and ate. We had a relaxing and delicious picnic at the polo grounds, and we topped off the day by going to see
the La Brea Tar Pits. All the while Penny and I were chatting, chatting, chatting. Ted was taking pictures of our surroundings. When I got home they sent me pictures that memorialized our wonderful day together.

When it was time for me to move on from ACM it was Penny I went to and discussed it with. She assured me I had made my contribution here, assured me I would be missed, and insisted I move on...because that is what was good for me!

I will most certainly miss Penny Crane...but my life is better because she was in it...and I know it would please her to hear that. I didn’t realize how many Penny Crane stories I had until I heard of her passing. I was telling some of my friends about our escapades together...and realized Penny was right there with me...as I became the storyteller. Take care and continue to do good things Penny...you are a special angel!!

Diane Darrow, Association Management Group

Memories of Penny Crane

I remember seeing Penny first at the Seattle SIGUCCS, telling us all to feel free to miss a few sessions to network and reminding the "old timers" to attend a few sessions to learn. Through the years, when I would see her between sessions or at social events, she always had a warm smile and would ask how I was. She always listened carefully to whatever I had to say in response, nodding as she seemed to follow my every word and value my response. A few years ago she even volunteered to play "mom" to my daughter if my daughter choose to go to college in southern California. Bright, friendly, energetic, enthusiastic and caring: these are my memories of Penny.

Jayne Ashworth, University of Virginia
I didn't know Penny except for a few conversations here and there. But when I think of Penny, I think of the SIGUCCS User Services conferences. Wherever the conference was held, and whatever the weather, there was Penny, leading the California contingent in sandals. :-)

Lynne Jeffers, Northwestern University

I'm sure many people considered Penny Crane a mentor. I certainly did. I fondly remember the hours spent at SIGUCCS meetings sitting with Penny and others in hotel lounges amid the haze of cigarette smoke.

What I was learning from her stories was not technical information but things more valuable: we work with computers but we're in a people business, enthusiasm can change your life, be friendly, treat people nicely, and most of all, have fun. Success is not your title nor your awards but how many friends you have and how many funny stories you can tell about your own life.

At the Monterey SIGUCCS meeting, I was walking out of the conference hotel, and I see Penny sitting on a bench talking with Laura Kim from Cal Berkeley. I could not resist. I had to stop and say to Laura, "Listen carefully because no amount of money could pay for the tips you're getting now."

Dennis Mar, Naval Postgraduate School
I'll always remember Penny.

My first conversation with Penny Crane was in the fall of 1979, at the hospitality suite of the fall ACM SIGUCCS User Services Conference in Los Angeles. I liked her immediately, and was so pleased that an "old timer" of the SIGUCCS group made me feel so welcome so quickly. I had just taken my very first job in academic computing and was so excited to talk to other people who knew exactly what my job was all about! I remember Penny saying, "this is the one - and maybe only place - where the people you talk to (about your job) will know exactly what you're talking about." She was right.

That night in the hospitality suite we talked about many things. Penny was interested in my graduate work in ornithology and natural history and she encouraged me to visit the La Brea tar pits in downtown LA, which are located very near her home. As she always did, with so many people, she honored me with her honest and sincere interest in my own experiences and background.

Penny and I became very close friends through the years, as I became one of the "old timers" and Penny became one of the "older timers." We would seek each other out at conferences and scurry off to the lounge or restaurant to "tell stories." Penny was a great story teller. We got to know each other and our families. We commiserated with other as the business of IT support got crazier and crazier, and we consoled each other when the pressure of our jobs was near the boiling point. Penny was intensely supportive of her friends, and a few years ago, when I was having some pretty intensive problems in a former job, I had to calm Penny down after telling her my story! She was ready to go into battle for my cause!

Penny devoted herself to ACM and SIGUCCS right to the end of her life. Her last contribution was to put together the slate of candidates for the spring 1999 officer elections. She arranged her tight teaching schedule in late October, 1998, to attend the first day of the User Services Conference in Bloomington, Indiana, so that she and I could work on the slate of candidates and so that she could be present for the
conference's opening reception. Together, we held a special pre-conference event for first-time attendees. She took a very early flight back to LA the next morning.

My last conversation with Penny was a phone call, just a few days before she left us. I had called her to talk about a couple of small remaining details with the upcoming SIGUCCS elections, then we went on for about an hour "telling stories." In particular, I got a kick out of her telling me about a bus trip that she and Ted had taken a day earlier to shop at Neiman Marcus in Beverly Hills. She was amused to wonder how many other Neiman Marcus customers had ridden the bus that day. She laughed heartily at that thought.

Penny was my very good friend, an inspiration, and a mentor. I miss her very much and I'll always remember her.

John Bucher, Oberlin College

Penny was one of the warmest people I've ever known. She loved life, and she loved people. She sought to include, to support, to challenge, to foster growth, to nurture joy in everyone she met; and her success rate was astonishing. We will miss her beyond anything words can express; but her spirit helped define SIGUCCS and will remain with us, and for that we are grateful.

Mike Yohe, Valparaiso University

Memories of Penny

At my first SIGUCCS, a number of years ago, I met Penny through my Assistant Director, a woman also active in ACM, a friend of Penny's as well, and with whom I was presenting.
At the convening of the conference, Penny's opening statement that later became the "Penny thing" providing excellent advice to both new people and old-timers about attendance at sessions, quickly became a tradition at following conferences.

As time moved on, and my participation increased, Penny spoke with me about joining a (crazy) group of people who volunteered to put together SIGUCCS 93 in San Diego. As a result of this conference, Penny and others around the country became my long-distance friends. In San Diego, her idea of "State Captains" to promote and inform others of ACM/SIGUCCS, became another tradition, and she decreed that I was to implement the latest Penny idea. Many of us on the 93 committee once again answered Penny's call and became the committee for SIGUCCS 97, in Monterey. Experiences I shall always remember with great fondness, well, most of them.

Throughout the conferences, committees and years, Penny Crane became far more than the tradition maker. She became Penny, my friend, someone who understood others and could be counted upon for some great "Penny advice". Her presence in both the SIGUCCS organization and her interactions with each of us will be truly missed.

Beth D. Ruffo, Syracuse University

I have known and loved Penn since the early 80's. I served as her Vice Chair prior to becoming Chair myself. Her wisdom, good sense, and fine humor were always evident. Her loss is a great one.

Russ Vaught, Penn State University
I can only echo others’ words that a mentor and leader has passed away.

Glenda E. Moum, University of Missouri-Columbia

It is difficult to pin Penny down to a few words. She was so many things. She was a friend and a colleague. We could not see each other for many months and just start where we left off the last time we saw each other. She was a mentor through both the words she said and the example she set.

She got me involved in SIGUCCS because one day she phoned me and said a woman named Ellen was going to call me and I was to say yes. I took Penny on faith and trust. When Ellen Jacobson from the University of Nevada called in 1983 and asked me if I would be the Local Arrangements Chair for the 1984 SIGUCCS conference to be held in Reno, Nevada I did not hesitate and said yes. The 1983 SIGUCCS Conference in New Orleans was the beginning of my involvement and appreciation of the “personal” professional organization.

This wasn’t the last time Penny got me involved in something new and different. She always seemed to know when you needed a challenge and she always had one to offer.

She listened. She told stories, wonderful stories.

I miss Penny. She was one of those people who were always there even when she was miles away.

Here is one of the poems that was read at Penny's memorial.

Do Not Stand At My Grave And Weep

Do not stand at my grave and weep
I am not there, I do not sleep
I am a thousand winds that blow
I am the diamond glints on snow
I am the sunlight on ripened grain
I am the gentle Autumn rain
When you awaken in the morning’s hush
I am the swift uplifting rush
Of quiet birds in circled flight
I am the soft star that shines at night

Do not stand at my grave and cry
I am not there... I did not die.

Authors Unknown

The other poem was "Tapestry of Life". Both of them were very poignant. I don't know if these are the exact words, but the meaning is the same.

"Tapestry of Life"

Life is like many little things, like stitches in a cloth. 
Alone they’re unimportant, complete, they mean a lot.
A friendly smile or handshake, perhaps a word of cheer. 
Sharing of the good times, or a sympathetic ear. 
Bird song in the morning, rain drumming on the roof. 
The tenderness of lovers, sweet memories of youth. 
The magic of the rainbow, the stillness of the night. 
Moonlight on the water, soft glow of firelight. 
Cries of happy children playing in the sun. 
The sense of satisfaction from a task that's been well done. 
As we each grow older, and memories recall, 
It’s these little unimportant things we treasure most of all. 
We look back and remember the stresses and the strife, 
And know these unimportant things weave the tapestry of life.

- Ria Frank
March 7, 1999

Penny,

Thanks for all that you gave us. We will always remember you. You were the best!

With love,

Your ACM SIGUCCS friends