



## Sallie Creel Quillian

May 22, 1938 - January 6, 2021

Sallie Ruth Creel Quillian, 82, of Coral Gables, FL died peacefully at Doctor's Hospital on January 6, 2021 after an unexpected illness. Sallie was born in Gadsden, AL to Joe and Nellie Jo Morton Creel. She moved to Miami at the age of 6, where she attended Coral Gables Elementary, Ponce Junior High, and Coral Gables Senior High, graduating in 1956. Sallie attended Duke University for one year and then transferred to Emory University and married her high school sweetheart, Warren W. Quillian II. They were married for 62 years. She completed her undergraduate degree at Emory while Warren finished medical school. During Warren's residency in pediatrics, Sallie taught high school and began her life as a mother. Their first daughter, Rutledge, was born in Boston; their second, Ruth, in Atlanta while Warren was stationed at Fort Benning. Sallie and Warren returned to South Florida in 1966 and lived just a few miles from her childhood home.

In 1967, Sallie and Warren welcomed son, Warren, and in 1970, their third daughter, Frances. Both were born at Doctors Hospital, the same medical center that cared for Sallie in her final days. While Sallie's youngest children were still in school, she began graduate studies at the University of Miami, completing a master's degree in Marriage and Family Therapy in her late 40s. She began part-time work as a licensed therapist at the First United Methodist Church of Coral Gables, continuing in that position for several decades. She particularly enjoyed counseling couples prior to marriage.

Over her life, Sallie took on many roles, excelling at whatever role she served – wife, mother, teacher, PTA President, Junior League member, first mate of the Beare's Lair, marriage and family therapist, grandmother, and lifelong friend to many. When she signed up for a role, she gave it everything she had.

Sallie delighted in her husband, her children and her friends. Her deepest love was for the man she married. While Sallie was a freshman at Duke, Warren drove after class from Atlanta to Durham, only to find that the girls' dorm was already closed, so all he could do was wave to her through the window. Theirs was a great love story. They remained inseparable. They were best friends, confidantes, bridge partners, boat mates, dance

partners, and partners in parenting.

Sallie was devoted to her children and wanted them to know just how deeply they were loved by their parents and by God, offering consistent and unwavering support to them throughout her life. She wrote letters to them on their birthdays, on many holidays, and especially when difficult things happened - always emphasizing what she valued most about each of them. When she and Warren traveled, she left each child a letter, just in case.

Sallie's friends were precious to her. She gathered annually with her Omega group (a high school service organization) and learned to Zoom with them through the pandemic. Sallie was a lifelong, loyal friend to many.

Sallie was fascinated by the lives of everyone she cared about. She peppered her family and friends with dozens of questions to learn more about how they were doing and what they were up to. She enjoyed pulling up a chair to listen. She created a home where all people were welcome, and she drew them in by taking an interest in the things that mattered to them.

Sallie was loving, authentic and fair-minded. She valued justice and doing the right thing. She pushed for change and stood her ground with love. She defended marriage equality, discussed ethics often, led values clarification groups for teens, and set a strong example by her actions. She was grateful for the privileges she enjoyed and keenly aware of them.

In 1971, when desegregation was struggling for a foothold in the Dade County Public Schools, Sallie and her family embraced the ideal of an equal educational system. She and several mothers started an After School House at Carver Elementary where children came in the afternoon to play, get help with homework, and enjoy a snack. The program helped instill confidence and stability in the lives of many children.

Sallie did not like to be the center of attention. (In fact, she wouldn't like the attention of this long obituary.) Although she was often quiet, she made her opinions known. It was clear if she disagreed with you, but she always honored your opinions. Sallie could be determined and unwavering. When she believed in something, she fought hard for it. But when making her case, she always tried to do it with love and patience.

Sallie was committed to personal and spiritual growth – and she urged others to join her in the search for knowledge and meaning. She valued learning new things and creating opportunities for others to learn as well. When her children were young, she always

provided outlets for creativity (e.g., decoupage, candle making, puppets, papier marché). She also helped create a group for women to learn about personal finance and investing, and she treasured music (piano in particular), the theatre, and live sports.

But oh, how Sallie loved to read! In the evenings, Sallie was typically in the wing chair in the living room, reading and contemplating something. Two of her favorite authors were Henri Nouwen and Fredrick Beuchner, but she also liked a good mystery. She enjoyed playing games with the family and friends, and gave all of her children a fondness for group games like charades. She had a great sense of humor, an infectious laugh, and a keen appreciation for quick wit.

Sallie adored Biscayne Bay, and she spent many weekends at Stiltsville. She cooked for days before taking the family there for a weekend, always including friends of all ages. Her children remember her standing on the upper porch, laughing with her husband and friends while eating Texas Trash and Rice Krispie treats, watching her children and their friends fish, swim, explore the flats, and sunbathe. She loved to bring everyone together to have fun.

Sallie appreciated nature, and in particular birds. In the last decade of her life, she took great pleasure in keep squirrels away from her birdseed by greasing the pole from the ground to the feeders. She laughed and laughed when they slid down unhurt before they could reach the food.

Sallie's selflessness extended throughout her life. She and Warren took a condo in Durham, NC when their granddaughter, Emma, was diagnosed with Rett Syndrome. They spent every Spring through Fall helping care for Emma, taking her to and from school, doctor's appointments, and running countless trips to the pharmacy. She and Warren balanced this with visits to their other children and grandchildren, while also returning to Miami frequently to care for Sallie's own mother, who died two years ago, just shy of 104. Sallie made innumerable trips to East Ridge to visit with her mother and take her a Caramel Frappuccino, one of her mother's last pleasures. That was Sallie – doing the kind thing, the right thing, the loving thing.

Sallie will be missed dearly by all who knew her. She leaves us a legacy of love, laughter, and a spirit of fairness. Although we are not able to have a service during these unusual times, please consider sharing a memory or story on the Tribute Wall. We the family would appreciate knowing more about how Sallie brought light into your life.

Sallie is survived by her husband Warren of 62 years, her four children: Rutledge, Ruth

(Mark), Warren (Heather), and Frances (Joe); 6 granddaughters (Reese, Kadi, Eliza, Laine, Emma and Drew); and her brother, Joe Morton Creel. The family will hold a private service, releasing her ashes near the mouth of Biscayne Bay. In lieu of flowers, please send donations to [Rettsyndrome.org](https://rettsyndrome.org) or the organization/cause of your choice in honor of Sallie.

# Comments

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“ Thinking of my Mom today - remembering the grace and warmth that so many have shared with us this year. Thank you for helping us laugh and cry and celebrate together this year. We miss her so but so many good memories to get us through.

**frances** - January 06 at 01:38 PM

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“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



**Ruth Wolever** - January 20, 2021 at 10:58 AM

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“ 1 file added to the album Tribute Wall



**Langhorne** - January 19, 2021 at 09:16 AM

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“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



**Langhorne** - January 19, 2021 at 09:15 AM

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“ I love this picture of Sallie and Uncle Warren.

**Langhorne** - January 19, 2021 at 09:10 AM

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“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



**Ruth Wolever** - January 15, 2021 at 06:50 PM

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“ I am honored and blessed to have known Mrs. Q. She was truly a blessing in my life and I will miss her. I have such fond memories of the times our families shared. She was always, warm, funny, firm, a great listener, honest, and beautiful...but my favorite thing was hearing her laugh. It was just infectious! Our condolences to your family.

Kerrie Sapp Lunsford

**Kerrie Lunsford** - January 15, 2021 at 01:48 PM

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“ Rest in Peace Mrs. Quillian. You will be greatly missed but never forgotten.

**Luis Mejer, Jr.** - January 15, 2021 at 01:25 PM

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“ I have fond memories of Sallie. She was part of my growing up in Coral Gables and I loved visiting with her and Warren on my visits back home.

Joan Marion Parrish

**Joan Marion Parrish** - January 14, 2021 at 09:24 AM

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“ Sallie in high school



frances thorndike - January 13, 2021 at 09:13 PM

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“ Having fun reading my Mom's Gables High year book.



frances thorndike - January 13, 2021 at 05:40 PM

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“ Share a memory, how do you share a life time of fun, laughter, and love? We moved to Camarin Street in 1971 and our lives were forever changed when Sallie brought us ice tea while we were moving in, Nellie Jo made her do it. From that day on...we sang in the sunshine, we laughed everyday. Crazy parrots, attack rabbits, Casey and Higgins the dachshunds. The kids searching for a life guard so they could swim, lunch at Grandma Quillian. The Riv, Stiltsville, and The Surf Club were all important parts of our memories. We were blessed to have you Sallie, you were always so sane, yet you loved our acting out zany ways....especially my Bill Blass dress and Neil's jokes. I will miss you forever and hold you in my heart. Thank you for being a best friend to me and to our family. We love you. Peggy Sapp

PS: Say hi to Neil and Tommy and tell them we missed them.

Peggy Sapp - January 12, 2021 at 09:37 PM

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“ 6 files added to the tribute wall



**Ruth Wolever** - January 11, 2021 at 07:55 PM



“ My memories of Sallie revolve mostly around her being with Emma. And smiling.

**Tammy Barry** - January 13, 2021 at 04:33 PM

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“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



**Ruth Wolever** - January 11, 2021 at 07:52 PM



“ Sallie loved helping and being with Emma

**Peggy Sapp** - January 12, 2021 at 08:56 PM

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“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



**Frances Thorndike** - January 11, 2021 at 01:33 PM



“ Sallie with her Mom and Warren at the BBYC

**Frances Thorndike** - January 11, 2021 at 04:17 PM



“ Nellie Jo...what a special picture!

**Peggy Sapp** - January 12, 2021 at 08:57 PM

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**Frances Thorndike** - January 11, 2021 at 01:31 PM

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“ Such a sweet person who will be missed by all she touched.  
Edgar Jones and Family

**Edgar Jones** - January 11, 2021 at 01:14 PM

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“ I would always get lost (with great glee) in Sallie's office, with floor to ceiling books!

**Langhorne Chipley Waterhouse** - January 10, 2021 at 02:40 PM

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“ Dear Ruth and family - This UVA Wahoo can never forget the amazing graciousness and hospitality Sallie and the Quillians showed us so many years ago.

We all treasured the times we came down to Coral Gables, spent time with your family, and got to enjoy Stiltsville. When Alan and I talk about that amazing place (and Warren III chumming for sharks in water we had just waterskied in!) we can't forget how lucky we were to know the Quillians.

Your mom was a blessing and I hope you find comfort in knowing how many lives she touched and that she lives on through them and through her faith.

Hugs and kisses, Sheree Gravely and the Gravely family

**Sheree Gravely** - January 10, 2021 at 11:50 AM

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“ Dear Dr Quillian.  
I'm so sorry of the passing of your wife Sally. She was a wonderful mother, wife friend and community person. Behind a great man there's always a great woman and so she was.

I will tell Marta Jr and Federico (Fico) who for so many years you were their doctor. Hope your children will take care of you in the weeks to come and your grandchildren.

My best regards

Marta N Fernandez

**Marta Fernandez** - January 09, 2021 at 06:01 PM

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From Mimi Munroe:

How very sad we all are. Losing your mother is about the worst thing imaginable. Her friends all looked up to Sallie -she was so wise. I used some of her advise she gave me once about my mother in law that I used my whole life. She was such a good, kind friend, and I want her family to know how much she meant to all her friends. I appreciated the times she would have us over once a week when our kids were little to give us a break, we all enjoyed these times to get together. I'll never forget the time we took Warren out in the boat with us. As we were sailing down the bay, Sallie and Warren came alongside Comanche in Bears Lair. Sallie asked if we had Warren on board. I said "yes", and comment was "let me see him".

I always admired that she had a very strong sense of right and wrong, yet was sympathetic to the problems of others. I remember all the fun we had at parties going all the way back to parties at the Barnacle. Our fun continued through the years.

You will miss your mother and wife and I will miss her so much. She will leave a whole behind.

**Mimi Munroe** - January 09, 2021 at 04:40 PM

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I'm so sad to hear about your mom. She was so loved by her friends, my parents especially. Everyone is just heartbroken to lose her. I was reminiscing with mom yesterday about your mom. She recounted how a your mom would host toddler play dates at your house while everyone brought their own sandwiches, good times at Stiltsville, helpful counseling advice, etc. I still remember her peanut butter rice Krispie treats with Chocolate on top and her caramel cake. I can still taste it to this day. Sending lots of love to you and your family.

**Mary Munroe Seabrook** - January 09, 2021 at 04:25 PM

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She made the best newspaper hats and was a force to be reckoned with in Uno, Pictionary and Charades! She was always genuinely happy to see friends and family and gave really great hugs. I will truly miss her and will make sure that my daughter hears about all of the summer trips we took to see her and Uncle Warren. And all of the chocolate milkshakes she let us have at the Riviera Club.

**Susie Massengale Schmonsees** - January 09, 2021 at 12:31 PM

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“ We grandkids love our Mimi. Thank you for years of Surf Club and Rice Krispie treats and soccer game cheering and puzzling and Mac and Cheese. We'll miss you!

**Eliza Thorndike** - January 09, 2021 at 11:58 AM

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“ Those amazing strawberry cream cheese crepes she made for breakfast! Ruth

**Ruth Wolever** - January 09, 2021 at 08:44 AM



“ Sallie's office with books overflowing, floor to ceiling! Langhorne

**Langhorne Chipley Waterhouse** - January 09, 2021 at 11:39 AM

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“ In 1951 when I was fresh out of college and was asked to teach a Sunday School class of 6th/7th graders at CG 1st Methodist, little did I know that one of its (rowdy?) members would be my future sister-in-law Sallie!—the only sister I ever had and such a wonderful one! Over all these years, we've shared fun and friendship as our families grew and we experienced together all the joys and sorrows of lives well lived. Thank you, Warren, for making all that possible. And, thank you, Q's, for all the happy memories we share. I loved your Mom so much.  
Harriet Quillian Chipley

**Harriet Quillian Chipley** - January 08, 2021 at 06:43 PM

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“ My beautiful Mom who I will always be grateful for.



**Frances Quillian Thorndike** - January 08, 2021 at 04:22 PM



“ Beautiful.

**Tommy Tomlinson** - January 08, 2021 at 07:06 PM



“ Beautiful!

**Lori Wood** - January 08, 2021 at 07:38 PM



“ what a wonderful person, so caring for others, she always had a smile for me, God bless her in Heaven, my prayers to the family, Vicki van orsdel dadesky

**vicki D'Adesky** - January 09, 2021 at 07:25 AM



“ Charades, jigsaw puzzles, fresh mangoes, visits to Matheson Hammock and Stiltsville, countless happy summers and Christmases - Aunt Sallie, you brought so much love and joy into our lives. I love you and will miss you so...

**Caroline Chipley Johnson** - January 09, 2021 at 12:03 PM



“ Beautiful indeed! I was so sorry to hear the news of your Mom's passing. My heart and thoughts are with you and your family! Be well and with peace.

**Tracy Nichols** - January 09, 2021 at 07:32 PM



“ I shall always remember the sparkle in her eye upon finishing a 1000 piece jig-saw puzzle. She was a dear friend and greatly admired. We send our love to your wonderful family and to Warren at this very sad time.

Sally and Dick Dowling

**Sally Dowling** - January 10, 2021 at 02:02 PM



“ Sallie was my oldest and dearest friend. Our parents were friends so we grew up together which made her more like a sister to me. Jerry and I met in their wedding and from then on she and Warren were our best couple friends. Sallie and I spent time doing jigsaw puzzles, discussing books, having long walks and talks searching for answers to life's BIG questions, and going on travel adventures. I remember her delicious bountiful food-- strawberry crepes and yummy coffee, chicken salad, soup and cornbread, cookies, her hand-picked tomatoes and strawberries, and her fetish for crystal clear ice cubes!

She was a counselor and a listener. The expression on her face in this photo is just how she would look at you when she was listening. She was like deep water beneath a calm lake. Her voice was quiet, but when she spoke everybody listened. Oh, how I will miss her. I loved her so.

Rosemary Laney Crow

