

Arizona Daily Star



Katherine Pavlich Duncan

A remarkable life of earthly accomplishment has drawn to a close with the passing of Katherine Pavlich Duncan, 94, on September 14, 2007, in Tucson, Arizona. She was preceded in death 10 months ago by her faithful husband of 67 years, Phoenix attorney Clarence J. Duncan. The couple spent their early years in Globe, followed by decades in Phoenix, and the last five years in Tucson. A classic American and patriot, Katherine was born to Croatian immigrants on November 26, 1912, in Lead, South Dakota. When Katherine was four years old, the family moved to Miami, Arizona. There, her father Ivo (John) worked in the copper mines and her mother Kate baked/cooked for other miners who were boarders. Katherine had four siblings, two reaching adulthood: brother, John Pavlich and sister, Mary Pavlich Roby. As a first grader, Katherine spoke no English but became known for her stellar academic achievements throughout her educational career. She was Valedictorian (Class of 1934) at Arizona State Teachers College (now Northern Arizona University) and was awarded the Lowell Prize, the highest of ASTC's academic honors. "Katie" was voted Homecoming Queen two years in a row (1932 and 1933). Her beauty was paired with leadership as she served as Student Body Secretary and Associated Women Students President. Katie's success in college developed naturally from her record at Miami High School where she graduated Salutatorian of her class (1930).

According to the MHS yearbook, Katie was "the cause of every school boy's sigh, the leading star of every eye." This apt and enduring pronouncement became true for Clarence. As a young attorney, he was captivated by the unique blend of intelligence, practicality and moral character that he saw in the attractive young law office assistant who would become his wife. With her degree in business administration, Katherine had returned to the Globe/Miami area after two years of teaching high school mathematics in Kingman, Arizona. In the self-sufficient, educated and smart young woman of Katherine Pavlich, Clarence, a bright, mature and accomplished young man, had finally met his match. Their partnership, love, mutual respect, and utter devotion to each other fulfilled the marriage covenant in an exceptional way, serving as an influential example to family and friends. "Aunt Kay" was famous for her mental acuity and stunning ability to articulate everything from current events to politics, from economics to sports, from birds in her yard to flowers in her garden. Her sharp mind, inner strength and good heart were dependable to the end. Her example of fortitude in the face of trial and humility in light of great blessings will continue to inspire those she has left behind. Katherine, is survived by her sister, Mary Pavlich Roby, and brother-in-law Fred Roby of Tucson. Fond memories and unceasing admiration for Kay will comfort nieces, nephews and other family and friends who have loved her so very much. Funeral Services will be held at St. Thomas the Apostle Church, 5150 N. Valley View Rd., Tucson, Arizona, at 11:00 a.m. Friday, September 21, 2007. Burial Services are being held at noon at the Pinal Cemetery in Globe, Arizona, Saturday, September 22, 2007. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions in her name may be made to The University of Arizona Cancer Center or the Goldwater Institute in Phoenix or to the charity of your choice.