

# ELAINE A. STAM

APRIL 16, 1942 – AUGUST 30, 2024



**Elaine A. Stam**, age 82, of Albuquerque, NM, and formerly of Rehoboth and Gallup, NM, passed away peacefully on Friday, August 30, 2024, at her retirement home, Manzano Del Sol. Elaine was a radiant and beautiful woman who enjoyed every moment of life and took joy in sharing her love and life with those around her.

Elaine was born in Rochester, NY, to John and Ann Schoonhagen. Elaine graduated from Rochester Christian School and East High School. She attended Calvin College for two years. Her journey took a turn when she married Richard Stam, who was in medical school at The University of Michigan. Richard's medical training took the couple from Ann Arbor, MI, to Columbus, Ohio. A two-year assignment with the U.S. Air Force in Washington State played a key role in their decision to eventually settle in Gallup, NM.

In Gallup, Elaine became a vital part of the community. She was active at Rehoboth Christian School where she served on the School Board and was the board President during a pivotal transition period.

Elaine was an active member of the Rehoboth Christian Reformed Church, where she generously volunteered her time and played a key role in fundraising efforts for a new church building. A passionate music lover, she was a member of the church choir, sharing her love of singing with the congregation. Elaine was an integral part of the Fellowship Church for the past 12 years. Elaine was an active volunteer member of the Rehoboth Christian Hospital Auxiliary where she served in various leadership roles.

Beyond her involvement in the Rehoboth community, Elaine also made her mark in Gallup, NM. She became the first female member of the Gallup Rotary Club. She was instrumental in organizing and coordinating famous speakers, such as Lou Holtz, Bill Walton, Tom Landry, and Joe Montana, for their annual scholarship banquet. She spearheaded the Drug Awareness Program for Gallup/McKinley Schools and was appointed to Governor Carruthers' Task Force on Drug Abuse. Elaine was also a proud member of PEO, an international women's organization focused on supporting women's education.

Elaine was a stay-at-home mom who dedicated her life to raising her three children. Once they grew older, she ventured into banking, eventually rising to the position of Vice President of Marketing for Bank of America. Known throughout her community for her vivacious personality, dedication, and compassion, Elaine touched countless lives, especially those in need. Elaine worked closely with the Native American and Hispanic communities, holding a special place in her heart for them. In return, she was deeply respected and loved by those she served.

Her family was the heart of her life, and she was deeply dedicated to supporting them in their various school activities and sports. That same unwavering support extended to her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She didn't just uplift her own children, but also encouraged and supported their friends, always making time for anyone in need. She was like a surrogate mom to many of her children's classmates. Her sense of humor was unmatched, and her laughter was absolutely infectious.

After Richard and Elaine retired, Elaine was deeply engaged in accompanying Richard on mission trips to remote, impoverished, cartel-controlled Tarahumara Indian villages in the Copper Canyons of Chihuahua, Mexico.

Elaine understood herself as a beloved child of God and saw her life's mission as sharing His love with everyone she met. At Manzano del Sol, she was a friend to all and a dedicated helper to many.

Elaine is survived by her loving husband of 62 years, Dr. Richard P. Stam, and their children: John G. (Chris) Stam; Michelle (Scott) Stam-MacLaren; and Beth A. (Bryan) Milligan. She was a beloved grandmother, deeply devoted to her seven grandchildren: Brooke Stam, Douglas (Dominque) MacLaren, Elysse (Nick) Gallegos, Ally Rayner,

Ryan Rayner, Melanie Milligan, and Megan Milligan. She also cherished her great-grandchildren, Donovan, Mikah, and Keira Gallegos, instilling in them the values of love and kindness. Elaine is further survived by her extended family, including her brother-in-law, George (Gretchen) Stam, and her sisters-in-law, Betsy Schoonhagen, Alice Ford, and Ruth (Will) Coe, as well as numerous cousins, nieces, and nephews.

Elaine was preceded in death by her parents, John and Anne Schoonhagen; her brother, Kenneth Schoonhagen; her parents-in-law, Garrett and Alice Stam; her brothers-in-law, Garth (Jean) Stam, Garrett (Sally) Stam, and John Stam; and her sister-in-law, Donna (Herb) VanHarken. She cherished the memories of each of them throughout her life.

A memorial service will be held at **Fellowship Church**, 4800 Indian School Blvd NE, Albuquerque, NM 87110, at 11 AM on Saturday, September 28, 2024, followed by a luncheon.

Interment will take place at **Gallup Veterans Memorial Cemetery** in Gallup, NM, on September 30, 2024, at 11 AM.

In lieu of flowers, the family kindly requests donations be made to **Rehoboth Christian School** in memory of Elaine A. Stam. Gift - [rcsnm.org](http://rcsnm.org).