

MARILYN JOAN PATTERSON

Date of Death: July 29, 1971; Date of Burial: July 31, 1971

Burial: N ½ 65, Section 1, 5th Addition

Marilyn Joan Patterson, 19, Loses Fight for Life Three Weeks after Car Accident
Services Saturday

A 19-year-old Berne girl who battled nearly three weeks for her life after being injured in a traffic accident July 8, lost the battle at 3:15 am Thursday.

Miss Marilyn Joan Patterson died in the intensive care ward of Lutheran Hospital in Fort Wayne after a fight for life which amazed even skilled doctors and specialist. She was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. LaVire Patterson, 618 Center Street.

Miss Patterson became Adams County's eighth traffic fatality for 1971.

The Berne girl, a 1970 graduate of South Adams High School, was one of two persons injured in a three-vehicle accident Thursday afternoon, July 8, in front of the Schwartz Blacksmith Shop on U.S. Highway 27 nearly four miles north of Berne.

She was practically crushed in the wreckage of her car and it required the services of several people to remove her after being pinned for 30 minutes. She received a badly broken left leg, the right knee cap was broken, and severe internal injuries. Her lungs were crushed and the lung condition finally led to her death. She at times responded to treatment and her valiant efforts to live had the entire community "rooting" for her.

Doctors and specialists, special nurses and members of the immediately family were with her almost around the clock. Doctors performed several operations to give her at least temporary relief from her respiratory problems. But doctors informed the family all along that if she survives it would be a miracle. For some time it looked like the miracle might be achieved, but her injuries were just too extensive.

Miss Patterson was headed south at the time of the accident at 2:50 pm July 8. Her car was struck by a northbound machine driven by Mrs. Joyce (Rose Ann) Smitley, 39, R.R. 1, Geneva. Mrs. Smitley has been hospitalized in the Adams County Memorial Hospital at Decatur since the accident with broken ribs, a broken ankle and lacerations.

The third vehicle in the accident was a panel truck driven by Ross A. Bowen, 27, R.R. 1, Monroeville, who was not injured. Bowen was headed north and stopped to make a left turn into the driveway of the blacksmith shop. Mrs. Smitley, following the truck, slid 180 feet, hit the truck, bounced off and then collided with the oncoming Patterson car.

A Texas doctor on vacation who came to the scene of the accident and whose name was not learned was credited with saving Miss Patterson's life at the scene by using his skill while she was being freed.

Marilyn Joan Patterson was born in Berne July 10, 1952, a daughter of LaVire and Inez K. Sprunger Patterson. She graduated from South Adams High School in 1970 and was attending International Junior College in Fort Wayne at the time of the accident. She was on her way home from classes at the time of the mishap.

Surviving are the parents; two sisters, Mrs. Pat Jones and Mrs. Marvin (Shelby) Zimmerman, both of Berne and two brothers, Robert L. Patterson, Berne and Larry, at home.

Miss Patterson attended the First Missionary Church where services will be held at 2 pm Saturday, Rev. E. Edwin Prosser and Rev. Gareth Widederkehr officiating. Burial will be in the MRE Cemetery.

Friends may call at the funeral home after 2 pm Friday.

Berne (IN) Library Heritage Room

MRE Obit Book 1966-1972

Transcribed by Jim Cox