



Sonya Damsker Lefkovits

May 6, 1923 - February 8, 2011

Sonya Lefkovits, 87, lovingly known by many of her friends as “Miss Sonya” passed away on Tuesday, February 8, 2011, in Solvang, California. Sonya Damsker was born May 6, 1923 in Memphis, Tennessee. She was reared in Tyler, Texas and graduated from Tyler High School. In 1944, she graduated from Louisiana State University (LSU) with a degree in Public School Music and moved to Nashville to serve as field secretary of the Girl Scouts Council, USA. She moved to Birmingham in 1947 to work at the Jewish Welfare Board as its first Activities Director. It was through this organization that she was introduced to her future husband Norman Lefkovits. After their marriage in 1947, the Lefkovits family ran the Columbiana Leader on Main Street, which her father-in-law began in 1896. The store closed in 1980 as Lefkovits became the primary caretaker of her beloved husband until his death in 1996. Lefkovits legacy to her community has been one of service. Her influence includes: Charter member and second president of the Vignette Club; chairman of the Columbiana Public Library Building Committee; first ambassador for the South Shelby Chamber of Commerce; founding member of the Columbiana Merchants and Professional Association; and honorary member of the Shelby County Historical Society. She is also listed in Who’s Who of American Women. She is survived by two children: daughter, Marsha Phyllis Lefkovits and her husband General Richard Quick, and son, Norman Leo Lefkovits, Jr., and his wife Martha. If you would like to remember Sonya, the family is asking in lieu of flowers for any contributions to be sent to the

following: In 2006, Marsha and Richard established the Norman and Sonya Lefkovits Shelby County 4-H Citizen Award. Please make check payable to the Alabama 4-H Club Foundation and sent to Tasha Worden at 226 Duncan Hall, Auburn University, AL 36849. Please specify "Lefkovits Citizen Award" on any contribution. Miss Sonya also worked tirelessly for the Shelby County Historical Society. Any loving contribution should be sent to the Society in care of Mr. Bobby Joe Seales, P.O. Box 457, Columbiana, AL 35051. Miss Sonya has been a beloved treasure of the Columbiana community and will be sorely missed by all those who knew her. Graveside service will be at 2 PM, Monday, February 14, 2011, at Bethel Cemetery in Hueytown, AL. Bolton Funeral Home of Columbiana is directing. Family will receive friends 3 to 4:30 pm, Sunday, February 13, 2011 at Bolton Funeral Home. Please sign online condolences at www.boltonfuneralhome.com.

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Tribute Wall

CW

“ One of the simplest gifts Miss Soya gave everyone, was her truly loving smile, it was always there! Great people can rarely be summed up in a few words and this is also true of her. Her legacy, influence and so much more. But, I will will always remember the everyday love I received whenever I was around her.

Cynthia Wallace - February 14, 2011 at 12:00 AM

LR

“ Dear Marsha and Norman, I want to extend my deepest sympathy on the passing of Sonya and to let you know that I am thinking of you. Even though it has been so long since I have seen her, I can see how full of life she was and I know she brought you much joy. I hope that all your wonderful memories of her will bring you comfort.

Lanie Richberger - February 14, 2011 at 12:00 AM

NH

“ Miss Sonya meant so much to all of our family. She was like another grandmother to our kids. Austin so enjoyed hearing all of her stories. We will always remember her at the Monster Walk wearing her funny Halloween glasses and passing our candy to the children. She was a wonderful woman who will be greatly missed by the whole city of Columbiana. May God provide you all with peace and comfort. Love, the Helmers family

Nicole Helmers - February 12, 2011 at 12:00 AM

RB

“ *Marsha, Our thoughts and prayers are with you during this time. Many fond memories of Lefkovits store on main street and the many times I shopped there and visited with your mom and dad. There is definitely a Lefkovits legacy that has been left on Columbiana.*

Roy and Nancy Blankenship - February 11, 2011 at 12:00 AM

PR

“ *I was blessed to have Miss Sonya in my life. She was my friend, my confidant, and surrogate mother in a time when I needed her loving support and wisdom. I loved Mama2 with all my heart. I mourn her loss and pray for God's comfort to be with all of you in the days ahead. The queen will be greatly missed. Love, Phoebe Donald Robinson*

Phoebe Donald Robinson - February 11, 2011 at 12:00 AM

MB

“ *We feel so grateful to have known you for the short time that we did. We will miss your company sorely. Now get up there in heaven and get it organized-- we know they can use your help. Much love Maryann & Gary*

Maryann & Gary Burris - February 10, 2011 at 12:00 AM

JB

“ *Sonya was a wonderful lady and will be missed by all who knew and loved her.*

Jan and Paul Bergson - February 10, 2011 at 12:00 AM

TF

“ We always enjoyed our time with Sonya and we delighted in her wonderful stories of the fun travels she shared with her family. We consider ourselves fortunate to have had the pleasure of knowing her. The Merski Family.

The Merski Family - February 10, 2011 at 12:00 AM

MD

“ Our love and sympathy are with you. I can't tell you of the memories I had "growing up" with both your parents and at your house. Memories that will last forever. May God cradle you in His arms with all the comfort and love you need at this sad time. Our thoughts are with you. If we can do anything, please let us know.

Mary Gene Denney - February 10, 2011 at 12:00 AM

JM

“ Dear Marsha and Norman, Please forgive my inadvertent mentioning of "Old Max," as your father. Quite obviously--as I knew and should have said--I meant your grandfather. It was late at night when I wrote it, and I wanted to get it to you, to show my genuine regret at your loss. Maybe that will excuse my memory lapse. The last time I saw your dear mother, I shared with her some of the stories my father had told me about his dealings, over many years, with "Old Max," as Daddy always affectionately called your grandfather. I will not cite them here, without your permission, but would be glad to relay them to you, if you email me: Jessemerrell@comcast.net. May God bless you. Shalom!

Jesse H. Merrell - February 10, 2011 at 12:00 AM

LL

“ Thank you Miss Sonya for all the times I was greeted and visited by you at the post office and local stores and your home. I've missed you since you moved to CA. Will miss you here in Columbiana. You have been a good part of my family's life here since 1955. You were a remarkable lady.

Lyn Wood Holmes Loyd - February 10, 2011 at 12:00 AM

MH

“ Marsha and Norman, I have fond memories of you and your family. Please know that you are in my thoughts and prayers. May you be comforted by the memories that you share as a family.

Marsha Horn Harbin - February 09, 2011 at 12:00 AM

JM

“ Dear Marsha and Norman, Please accept the sincere sympathies of an old Shelby boy, whose father, James W. Merrell, was a dear friend of your father, “œOld Max,“ who told Daddy he made three attempts before succeeding in leaving his native Hungary. Max told you, Marsha, how he suffered severe religious persecution in Hungary, but how could sit safely and serenely in a temple in America“and nobody ever tormented him. You repeated the heartwarming story in your first-place-winning high school religious liberty essay named in my father’s honor, which pleased your dear mother, whom I enjoyed visiting with on my visits to Shelby in later years, and sending her some articles I had written mentioning that incident in one of them after my tour of Israel in 1997. My mother, Emma Davis Merrell, told me how “œOld Max,“ as Daddy affectionately called him, would trudge around the county with a big trunk on his back, until he opened the Columbiana Leader, later operated by his sons, Alvin and Normal. Although your dear mother has joined them now, their splendid legacy still lives on“through faith and perseverance“just as Israel does today, as it has for millenniums, and as you will dutifully carry forward their precious heritage with dignity and honor. Always remember the hope and survival mantra on the lips all freedom-loving Jews since ancient Babylonian captivity: “œNext Year in Jerusalem!“ I hope to go back to Jerusalem next year myself. Shalom!

Jesse H. Merrell - February 09, 2011 at 12:00 AM

G(

“ Dear Family of Sonya, I grew up in Columbiana and so well remember all of the Lefkovitz family and the Columbiana Leader. I will always remember these gracious people who made me even as a young girl feel special to them when I would go into their store. Alvin, Dorothy, Sonia, and Norman were all wonderful people who served the town well as business people and as friends to each of us. I know you will each miss Sonya as the loving mother and grandmother that she was.

Gwendolyn Farr (Johnson) - February 09, 2011 at 12:00 AM

YW

“ Norman and Marsha, Your mother and father meant so much to many people. I always adored them both. Please know that you are in my thoughts and prayers and I'm very sorry to hear of your loss. It is very hard losing the people we love. Yoby Sims Whipp

Yoby Sims Whipp - February 09, 2011 at 12:00 AM

HJ

“ I wish to extend my sincere sympathy and condolences to Marsha and Little Norman.

Hylott L. Armstrong, Jr. - February 09, 2011 at 12:00 AM