

Lynn Smith Tharp

Lynn Smith Tharp was born in 1947 to parents Monroe and Emma Lou Smith. She went to Mexico schools and was in the first graduating class to attend North Miami High School for all four years after its consolidation.

After high school, Lynn went to a college in Michigan for a year, but was not happy there and eventually transferred to a business school in Fort Wayne. After deciding that she was not happy there, either, she left school and married Bill Tharp. Because Bill was in the air force, the two were forced to move across the country from Texas, Florida, Michigan, and eventually back to Peru.

The couple had two sons, Brian and Christopher, and lived in Peru until they eventually divorced. Lynn never remarried.

Having been a stay-at-home mother during her married life, Lynn had never had a real job, but she was determined to raise and provide for her children by herself. Her determination led her to a job cooking at a truck stop.

Although she loved her new job, Lynn eventually decided that she wanted to go back to school and get a nursing degree. She eventually received her LPN and was working toward her RN when she fell ill from a lymphoma.

Sadly, Lynn passed away in September 13, 2007 at the young age of 60. She was a mother, a daughter, a homemaker, and a friend. She was always kind and caring, and the community of Miami County was made better because of her.

After her daughter passed, Emma and her oldest daughter, Karen, decided that they wanted to find a way to honor her memory and help the students of North Miami High School. They decided to create a scholarship to help students with intent to study nursing, regardless of whether or not they are top students. The scholarship is also important to the family, as Karen, Lynn's sister, also works in a nursing home, and Lynn's son has a hearing disability. For that reason, special consideration goes to those who intend to study hearing disabilities.

"It's been an absolute delight," said Emma, who enjoys reading the 'Thank you' notes she receives from the students.

For more information about the Miami County Community Foundation, or to learn how the Foundation can help you fulfill your charitable wishes, contact Connie Cutler, Director of Development, at 765-475-2859 or visit nicf.org.

