



CONSTANCE M. COOPER

SEPTEMBER 11, 1923 – MAY 18, 2016

*Officiating*

EDWARD J. HOULEHAN

*Greetings to the congregation to honor Connie*

EDWARD J. HOULEHAN

*Opening Prayer*

JOHN G. HOULEHAN

*Eulogy*

EDWARD J. HOULEHAN

*Special Reading*

JOHN G. HOULEHAN

*Palm 23*

JOHN G. HOULEHAN

*Song*

IN THE GARDEN

*Brief Prayer*

EDWARD J. HOULEHAN

*Closing Song*

SOMEONE TO WATCH OVER ME

## CONSTANCE M. COOPER

Constance M. Cooper leaves us with grand memories—a fitting parting gift to a life richly lived. Friendships were her most prized possessions, and she had a unique gift for bringing happiness to everyone she knew.

Connie was born on Sept. 11, 1923 at her grandmother's home. She lived there until the age of 5, when she went to live with her Aunt Maud. It was from this amazing woman that Connie learned about growing into a kind-hearted, hard-working lady.

Connie graduated from Central High School in 1940 at the age of 16 and immediately set out to work. Her Aunt Maud had instilled, by example, just how important it was that Connie establish herself independently. Several years later, Connie attended the Sarachon Hooley Secretarial School to learn shorthand and typing in order to advance her career. Understanding the importance of education, she would continue to take various courses throughout her life.

As a vivacious young businesswoman, she represented many nationally known manufacturers in various marketing ventures. She was on the "Jack Carson Amateur Hour" at the Tower Theatre, and a highlight for her in those early years was modeling the Hope Diamond, the Star of the East Diamond, and the 40-carat Marquis Diamond, all of which were on tour to benefit the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis. Later, that dedication led her to become the first woman elected to Chair the March of Dimes in Kansas City.

Connie advanced her business career at A.C. Allyn (now Smith Barney), followed by her entry into the advertising

industry, where she left her imprint as the first female account executive with Barickman Advertising. An associate described her as "having an outstanding disposition and natural inclination to further the cause of achievement in her endeavors." She became Account Executive for the first American Royal Rodeo and later joined Beverly Norman Public Relations as an account manager.

Among her many activities, she was a member of the Board of Directors of the K.C. Sheltered Workshop for the Handicapped, Johnson County Agency for Sexual Assault, Girl Scouts, Planned Parenthood of Greater Kansas City, Kansas City Women's Chamber of Commerce, and served on the VIP Panel for the Variety Club of the K.C. Telethon. Her professional associations included American Woman in Radio and Television and the Radio & TV Council of Greater Kansas City. An active and creative person, Connie founded "Connie's Mink Trimmed Gifts," an unusual and fashionable idea in its day.

When Connie married Thom Randolph Cooper in 1966, she became a household executive and his companion to many sporting activities, including sailing, hunting, and golfing. In 1991, Thom was diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease, and Connie, sticking to her promise he would never enter a nursing home, lovingly cared for him in their home until his passing in 1997.

From a gun-toting wife to a glittering beauty in the evening, Connie knew no strangers and enjoyed every activity she participated in and every person she met. Her Aunt Maud taught her to live by the Golden Rule at an early age, and Connie never for a moment forgot her Aunt Maud's guidance.

She never left a joyous gathering without marking the moment with a photograph and then graciously sending a copy to the host. Ever immaculately mannered, she would immediately send thank-you notes for any gift or luncheon in her honor, and return RSVPs the same day she received an invitation.

An award for Outstanding Leadership from the Dale Carnegie Organization epitomized her ability to "win friends and influence people." She also received a special honor for volunteer service to the Metropolitan Community College Homesharing Project with the objective of building relationships between youth and seniors.

Always wanting to make others happy and bring fun into their lives, she volunteered to entertain with dancing routines in various nursing homes and was an activities director in a nursing home. She was on the Board of Directors of the Jackson County Community College and listed in World's "Who's Who of Women," 2000 Women of Achievement, and Personalities of the West and Midwest. And since its inception, Connie has been a steadfast supporter of the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts.

In later years, she traveled extensively and mentioned one of her most fun and interesting trips was going "Around the World" by private Concorde.

Connie was a great beauty—both of body and spirit—and a brilliant woman far ahead of her time. She had a rare zest for life, living every moment to its fullest. Connie touched many lives, leaving each one many bountiful blessings of everlasting friendship.

—Katherine Bontrager Houlehan