Marilyn Reliance Mason Foss died Tuesday, January 21, 2014 surrounded by her loving family.

Marilyn was born August 28, 1933 in Mason City, Iowa to Robert W. and Mildred Cady Mason. She graduated from Mason City High School and subsequently received a B.A. in Humanities from the University of Minnesota and an M.S. in Education (Art) from Winona State University. In 1955, she met the love of her life, Frederick W. Foss, Jr., at the University of Minnesota and they were married December 7 (Pearl Harbor Day), 1957 at the University Baptist Church in Minneapolis. After a honeymoon on the North Shore, they began their long tenure in Winona and raised three fabulous sons: Stephen Frederick Foss, Andrew Mason Foss, and Jason Alexander Foss.

Marilyn was ever active in Winona organizations: she was a board member of Altrusa International; president of Winona State Faculty Wives; member of the Winona County Government Study Commission; board member (seven years) of Winona Home and Community Options; board member and Program Chair of the Winona Flower and Garden Club; member of the League of Women Voters; President of the Winona Chapter of the Archeological Society; member of the Winona Arts Center, the Winona County Historical Society, Women's Resource Center of Winona, and the MacNider Art Center of Mason City, Iowa.

While a student at the University of Minnesota, Marilyn was a volunteer usher for concerts at Northrop Hall and developed a love of symphony music, attending many concerts in Minneapolis every year for fifty years. She had a lovely soprano voice and enjoyed singing in choirs. She also enjoyed creating art and was an excellent water-colorist. Marilyn's employment included: bacteriologist at Pillsbury Mills Research and Development in Minneapolis, copy writer at KAGE Radio, art teacher in Lewiston, Minnesota High School, faculty member in the Winona State University External Studies Department, and Corporate Copy Writer, Director of Recipe Development and cookbook author (five books) at Watkins, Inc. Marilyn is survived by her husband, Fred, and their three sons: Stephen (Andrea Cervantes) Foss of Sacramento, California, and Andrew Foss and Jason Foss of Winona; her sister, Marjorie Mason Kirsch and her husband Horst Kirsch (of Wylie, Texas) and their children Erika and Christopher. She had a special warm place in her heart for Brittany Schueler of Minneapolis.

Memorials may be directed to the Winona Women's Resource Center. Visitation with the family will be Monday, January 27, 2:00-5:30 PM at Fawcett-Junker Funeral Home, Winona. Words of sympathy or remembrance may be left at www.fawcett-junkerfuneralhome.com.