



Jonda Riley McFarlane

March 29, 2026

Jonda Riley McFarlane died at home on March 29, 2026. She was 87 years old. She is survived by three children (Lauren, Scott, and Melissa), eight grandchildren (Kara, Maggie, Tulley, Tom, Pierce, Piper, Elliott, and Aidan) and a loving extended family.

Jonda was born in Frederick, Maryland. Much younger than her sister Marilyn and brother Oscar Winston Riley III (“Toby”), she developed an outgoing nature that lasted throughout her life. In 1955 she met her future husband, Robert C. “Bud” McFarlane, at a church youth group and charmed him into asking her to his high school prom. They were married in 1959 after Jonda graduated from Penn State and Bud graduated from the Naval Academy. They had been married 62 years at the time of Bud’s death. She forged a close, loving family during Bud’s military career, including his absences for two tours of duty in Vietnam, and she made the most of peacetime assignments for the whole family in Geneva, Switzerland, and Okinawa, Japan. She began teaching school as the children got older, ultimately teaching English at Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School, her alma mater.

Beyond creating a loving home and nurturing students, Jonda believed in civic engagement. She delighted in collaborating to get things done, from organizing the first Earth Day activities at her children’s elementary school to playing a major role in establishing the Georgetown Waterfront Park and Francis Scott Key Park, both of which are now part of the National Park Service system. She served three terms on the Advisory Neighborhood

Commission, one of them as Chair. In 1995, she was selected as a “Georgetown of the Year” in recognition of her community service. Jonda always had a multitude of interests and causes. She cooked, read, wrote, and traveled widely with Bud (who served as National Security Advisor to President Ronald Reagan). She welcomed Vietnamese refugees, served in church leadership, worked to end human trafficking, and plunged into political campaigns, always reaching out to bring others onto the team. She was adventurous and creative. She always had the energy to take on one more project.

Jonda’s family and friends remember her warm “can do” spirit and her passion for making her world better and more beautiful. We will miss her.

A memorial service in honor of Jonda will be held on July 17 at 3 p.m. at Georgetown Presbyterian Church (3515 P St NW, Washington DC).

Tribute Wall

BN

“ My shared memory is of Jonda as a classmate at BCC, class of 1956. She was always a happy and energetic friend. I kept up with some of her many doings since our husbands were USNA, '59 classmates. I offer the hope that good memories carry your family forward. Barbara Martin Naef

Barbara Naef - June 02 at 10:23 AM

RD

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Robert Drozd - May 11 at 03:46 PM

RD

“ Jonny, have you gone to catch up with Bud? There'll be a lot of others to greet you there too. We are diminished by your absence. We are grateful for your memory. In Pacem.
Bob Drozd

Robert Drozd - May 11 at 03:41 PM

FT

“ Precious Jonda you are missed! RIP



Frank Titus - April 26 at 10:27 AM