

**Valerie Ann Cowan (Heschong)**

**May 23, 2012**

**Age 58**

**Johnson City, Tennessee**

Valerie Ann Cowan Heschong died on May 23, 2012 at age 58 in Johnson City, Tennessee.

She was survived by her daughter, Jessica Edmisten (Jason) and sons Chris Heschong (Nicole), Aaron Heschong, as well as six grandchildren: Chloe, Grady, William, and Brooks Edmisten and Benjamin and Violet Heschong. Valerie was also survived by her mother, Joan J. MacAyeal, and her brothers, James "Pie" Cowan and Ian MacAyeal.

She was preceded in death by her father, James William Cowan.

Valerie was born on October 13, 1954 in Madison, Wisconsin and lived in Wisconsin and Ohio during her childhood and teen years. As a young woman, she moved to Tennessee with her daughter, Jessica, to start a new life. She served others as a certified occupational therapy assistant, helping disabled patients to achieve recovery and independence. In 1982, she married Roger Heschong, and took his son, Chris, under her wing. Valerie and Roger soon gave birth to another son, Aaron. She helped her husband build his chiropractic practice, and served as the office manager for many years. Valerie was a member of Grace Fellowship Church in Johnson City.

Valerie was a mother, devoted wife, teacher, caregiver, artist, student, free thinker, believer, and a dreamer. She was a gentle spirit, who lived by the mantra, "peace be with you."

Valerie was also strong, courageous, and independent. She lived with a disability for many years, but never wanted to be labeled or defined by her condition. She could do anything she wanted, and she would prove it to you. She was able to live alone for many years of her life.

Valerie was also an eager student, whose hunger for learning and knowledge was never quenched. She had a great imagination, and was a very creative person, which was expressed through sewing, the arts, language and music.

Valerie's hands were strong as the result of hard work, but these same hands could also be incredibly gentle.