



Evelyn Adele Hedges Marchant

May 17, 1941 - June 18, 2026

It is with heavy hearts that we announce the passing of Evelyn Adele Hedges Marchant, affectionately known as "Kai," at the age of 85. To some she was Evelyn or Adele, but to most she was simply Kai. Two of us knew her as Mommy, and six of us were fortunate enough to call her Grandmommy.

Kai grew up at Waverly, a large Victorian home outside Brunswick, Maryland, alongside her three brothers: Robert E. Hedges "Bob" (predeceased), Harry S. "Born on Christmas Day" Hedges (Tampa, Florida), and Daniel C. Hedges "Chuck" (Lovettsville, Virginia). As a child, she spent countless hours playing with her brothers, including games of hide-and-seek among the home's bookcases and hidden alcoves.

When Kai was 14 years old, her father, John Sprigg Hedges, died unexpectedly. Shortly thereafter, with the blessing of her mother, Nena Adele Flook Hedges, and the support of a significant scholarship, she attended St. Mary's Seminary Jr. College, where she completed High School and an Associate of Arts Degree. During her years there, she excelled in competitive field hockey and developed a lifelong appreciation for Southern Maryland's beautiful shoreline. Her competitive spirit and determination remained defining characteristics throughout her life and were evident in everything she pursued. After St. Mary's she earned her Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education from the University of Maryland.

Kai met the love of her life, Holt L. Marchant "Jay," on a blind date at Congressional Country Club during the Christmas season of 1959. She often

joked that a "country mouse" married a "city mouse" when they wed on July 18, 1964. Their marriage spanned 61 wonderful years.

The couple began their life together in Annapolis, Maryland, before moving to Middletown, Connecticut, where Kai taught elementary school in both Middletown and New Haven. After returning to Maryland, she continued her teaching career in Baltimore County. They were blessed with two daughters, Stephanie Marchant Gattuso and Juliet Marchant Neal.

Shortly after Juliet's birth, the family moved to Woking, Surrey, England, where they enjoyed three memorable years abroad, traveling extensively and forming lifelong friendships. Upon returning to the United States, they settled in Wilton, Connecticut, where they lived for 16 years. During that time, Kai launched her own painting and wallpaper business, ultimately earning enough to purchase her dream car—a 1985 Morgan sports car—which she absolutely loved. She also enjoyed coaching girls' field hockey, skiing, photography and gardening.

After leaving Wilton, Kai and Jay lived in the Chicago area before returning to Maryland to be closer to family. They built their dream waterfront home in Queenstown, where Kai delighted in tending her gardens and trees and driving her grandchildren around on her tractor. Her grandchildren adored their Grandmommy, and she cherished every moment with them.

Her first grandchild, Criostoir Neal of Norfolk, Virginia, was followed a year later by Grant Gattuso of Cambridge, Massachusetts. Over the next 18 months, four more grandchildren joined the family: Gavin Gattuso of New York, New York; Blake Gattuso of Boston, Massachusetts; Connor Neal of El Portal, California; and Eleanor "Ellie" Neal of Fairfax Station, Virginia.

To her grandchildren, Grandmommy was the quintessential grandmother. They fondly remember her wisdom and humor through favorite expressions such as, "When you're traveling, you never know when you'll eat again," "That's water off a duck's back," and "The union would not approve of this." These sayings will continue to bring smiles for generations to come.

Kai was deeply involved in her community. She was an active member of Old

Wye Church in Wye Mills, Maryland, where she chaired the Altar Guild, co-chaired the May Fair Committee, and volunteered at the Books Fair and Christmas Bazaar. Through the Queen Anne's County Garden Club, she chaired the club's participation in the Maryland House and Garden Tour. She was also a dedicated member of the Queen Anne's Chorale where she served two terms as president, and the General Perry Benson Chapter of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution, where she spearheaded Queen Anne's County's early participation in Wreaths Across America. She was also a proud member of the Jamestowne Society, First Maryland Company.

Later, Kai and Jay moved to Easton, Maryland, where she remained actively engaged in her many organizations and passions. She could often be found training for road races and frequently won her age group. She was especially proud of repeatedly winning her division in the Thanksgiving Turkey Trot benefiting the Michael J. Fox Foundation, organized by her daughter Juliet in Northern Virginia.

Kai adored animals, and they seemed to adore her in return. Along with her lifelong love of cats, dogs, and horses, she developed a special affection for birds. Caring for them became part of her daily routine, interrupted only when she was traveling.

Travel remained one of Kai and Jay's greatest shared joys. In May, they traveled to Massachusetts, where they attended a Boston Pops concert at Symphony Hall, explored botanical gardens, and celebrated Kai's 85th birthday on May 17. Family members were delighted when she blew out all 15 candles on her birthday cake in a single breath. Later that month, she attended a family reunion and memorial service for her brother Bob, speaking warmly to the congregation. On the final weekend of May, she and Jay traveled to Norfolk, Virginia, to visit their oldest grandchild, Criostoir, and his wife, Kirstin, enjoying time together exploring the area, including a walking tour of the local zoo.

Kai is survived by her devoted husband, Holt L. Marchant "Jay"; her daughter Stephanie M. Gattuso (Matthew), and their children Grant, Gavin, and Blake; her daughter Juliet M. Neal (Jamie), and their children Criostoir (Kirstin), Connor, and Ellie; her brothers Harry Hedges (Gwen), Tampa, FL and Chuck Hedges (Betty), Lovettsville, VA; and many beloved extended family members and friends whose lives were enriched by knowing her.

She was welcomed into Heaven by her parents, John Sprigg Hedges and Nena Adele Flook Hedges; her brother Robert E. Hedges; and her half-siblings John Hedges Jr., William Hedges, and Mary Louise Bellack.

Kai's life was defined by her love of family, her boundless energy, her competitive spirit, and her dedication to her community. She leaves behind a legacy of laughter, service, determination, and unconditional love that will continue to inspire all who knew her.

A funeral will be held at 11:00 AM, Monday, June 29th at the Old Wye Church in Wye Mills, MD. In lieu of flowers please consider a donation to the Episcopal Church Women (ECW) of Wye Parish (https://www.eservicepayments.com/cgi-bin/Vanco_ver3.vps?appver3=Fi1giPL8kwX_Oe1AO50jRv3VT5GSwd0GSrA_9F6E6Y_HO3iVYxvvhHjRfLOeq662EvVVAEjqawDomKT1pboueWG30LTX6Wm30X6g1ISLBI=) or to the Queens Anne's Chorale (<https://qachorale.org/donations/>)

Upcoming Events

Memorial Service

JUN **29**. 11:00 AM (est)

Old Wye Church
14114 Old Wye Mills Rd
Wye Mills, MD 21679
(410) 827-8484

Tribute Wall



“ *Fellows, Helfenbein & Newnam Funeral Home created a Webcast in memory of Evelyn Adele Hedges Marchant* ”



Fellows, Helfenbein & Newnam Funeral Home - 5 hours ago