



Sara S. Underdown Obituary

December 27, 1957 - July 13, 2009

A memorial service held at Covenant Presbyterian Church, 11 AM Monday, July 27, 2009 and at Covenant Presbyterian Church. Dr. Biff Coker will officiate. Sara was born, December 27, 1957 to Carl and Nina Burns Shell in Hickory NC. She was a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Charlotte NC. She was a member of Covenant Presbyterian Church and retired from the Chamber of Commerce as VP of Convention and Visitors Bureau. She assisted in the start up of the Snickers Marathon, was known as a "business cheerleader", was involved with Quail Unlimited, and raised "tourism" in Albany to a new level. She is survived by her husband, Parks "Chip" Underdown III, of Albany, her daughters: Sara Lauren Moore, Carole Elizabeth Page Moore, both of Myrtle Beach SC, Michelle Underdown Wilkes, (Chris), of Montezuma, GA, Erica Grace Underdown of Powder Springs, GA, and Katherine Nicole Frye of Athens, GA, her sons Parks C. Underdown IV (Megan), of Arlington VA, and Jonathan David Frye of Davenport IA, her parents Carl Q. and Nina Burns Shell of Hickory NC, her brother Phillip D. Shell of Austin TX, her sister Carla Shell Canipe (Wade) of Hickory NC, her niece, Ashlie Canipe of Tallahassee FL, and a host of close friends.

Tribute Wall



“ *Sara S. Underdown Obituary*

May 22, 2023 at 01:29 AM



“ *Chip and Family: Please accept my heartfelt sympathy on the passing of Sara. I was deeply saddened to hear of your loss. Sara was an inspiration to so many, was a dear friend, and she will always be warmly remembered. You all are in my thoughts and prayers.*

*Fran Dunning-Webb
North Myrtle Beach, SC*

Fran Dunning-Webb - August 03, 2009 at 12:00 AM



“ *Sara was an amazing woman. We grieve with you for your loss. We also rejoice that we were able to meet her. She exhibited love to all around her.*

Sharon & Tom McFarland - July 26, 2009 at 12:00 AM



“ *My heartfelt sympathy goes out to Sara's entire family. Sara was indeed an inspirational person. Her spirit and kindness will not be forgotten. I worked with Sara through my position at Phoebe Putney Hospital, as well as through the Snickers Marathon. She was a joy to work with -- always upbeat, positive and caring. She will be missed!*

Rebecca Reed - July 24, 2009 at 12:00 AM

FW

“ Sara was the most kind, friendly, positive person that I've ever met. Her presence would out shine any room. Her short journey in life will be so missed and, like me, I'm so proud to have known her and been her friend. She truly was the "Business Cheerleader" and her radiant smile and presence was just like none I've ever known. My thoughts and prays are to Chip, what a SAINT, her children, parents, family and extended family, who are all of us she touched. She will be so sadly missed, but will live forever in our hearts.

Fran Dunning-Webb

Fran Dunning Webb - July 20, 2009 at 12:00 AM

RG

“ Chip, I've not seen you and Sara in many many years, Please know our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family at this time. Seeing her vibrant smile brought back many old memories of you two. My deepest sympathies.

Robert Gilbert - July 20, 2009 at 12:00 AM

DC

“ Sara was a good childhood friend of mine, along with her brother. I'm 4 years older than Sara, so when I was around 18 to 20 years old, we all hung out at the park just up the street from Sara's house. In fact, her and one of her friends were vacationing at Myrtle Beach the same time I was and we all had a great time. I haven't seen her since then as I've moved all over the country, now living in the Dallas/Ft. Worth, TX area. I am saddened by this news. My heartfelt sympathy goes out to Sara's family.

Dean Carswell - July 20, 2009 at 12:00 AM

SC

“ Dear Chip, the Shells and the Underdowns,

I was deeply saddened to learn of the death of Sara late tonight. I was a classmate of her's at Hickory High School and when I learned she was sick, far away from home, I emailed MD Anderson several times for them to take my emails to her room to let her know I was thinking about her. Her smile was always beautiful and she was a wonderful person, both inside and out. Sara, you will be truly missed.

You all are in my thought and prayers.

*Sincerely,
Stephanie Stuckey Chenault
Mesquite, Texas*

Stephanie Stuckey Chenault - July 19, 2009 at 12:00 AM

CA

“ *My most heart felt condolences go to both the Shell and Underdown families. Although I haven't seen Sara in a few years, she was just one of those individuals you wanted to stay connected with. We all have so many great memories of a life well lived. Thank you Sara, for the memories and your friendship over the years.*

Cindy Abernethy - July 19, 2009 at 12:00 AM

EB

“ *Sara was such a blessing to so many. she certainly was to me. I will remember your family in my prayers.*

Esther Barwick - July 19, 2009 at 12:00 AM

KB

“ I have lots of great memories growing up in Hickory with Sara and later at UNCC. She was such a warm and fun person to be with, always cheerful and kind.

Kathy Davenport Blackburn - July 18, 2009 at 12:00 AM

PK

“ My thoughts and prayers are with your family.
Paul Kilmer - Austin, Texas

Paul Kilmer - July 17, 2009 at 12:00 AM

KB

“ My life is forever changed by my friendship with Sara. I learned a new level of optimism, diligence and unselfishness from her. She was a remarkable woman and our earthly life will miss her terribly. I now look forward to heaven a little bit more knowing Sara is there. To her family: Please accept my deepest sympathies. Sara was one great woman! I am blessed to call her friend.
Katrina Bowers

Katrina Bowers - July 16, 2009 at 12:00 AM

SG

“ As I'm writing this and look at the picture of Sara, she still reminds me of the Sara I loved and looked up to as a little girl when she and Chip began dating in school. We were so blessed that she once again became part of our family and brought her beautiful daughters into it with her. She has been a hero to all of us and we will miss her loving heart and huge smile here on earth, but we know that we each have an angel with a big smile looking down and guiding us from above! Love, Susan

Susan Geck - July 16, 2009 at 12:00 AM

LM

“ Dear Chip and Family:

I am very saddened to learn this news. As you know, Sara was a special person and my life was enhanced by her presence. It was a pleasure to work near her as we had offices across from each other during our tenure in Albany. Please know that my thoughts are with you. I will always remember her smile and uplifting disposition. Hold those precious memories close. With great sympathy, Linda D. Moore, Braselton GA

Linda D. Moore - July 16, 2009 at 12:00 AM

NS

“ With my deepest sympathy, Sara was an amazing individual that brought inspiration to so many with her passion, dedication and determination!! She will be greatly missed.

May the peace which comes from the memories of love shared, comfort you now and in the days ahead

Nerissa Serrano-Okiye - July 16, 2009 at 12:00 AM

VW

“ There was a song called "Sara Smile" by a group in the 80's and that's what happens whenever I think of Sara...I smile. There was a time when she and I were close, close like brother and sister, I remember those times well and with great fondness. You are with God now...keep him smiling Sara!!!

Vic Wilfong - July 16, 2009 at 12:00 AM

JT

“ God bless Sara and her family and know that she is heaven. What a gal - I was blessed to have known her!!!

Jill Teter - July 16, 2009 at 12:00 AM

BJ

“ Sara was a bright light for Georgia and a delight to be around. Her tourism buddies and those fortunate to call her friend share in your grief at this time. She will be sorely missed by all. Please know that we're praying for you!

Beda Johnson - July 16, 2009 at 12:00 AM

MG

“ My thoughts and prayers are with your family. Sara was a wonderful person, and I will miss her greatly.

Melanie Grace - July 16, 2009 at 12:00 AM

SM

“ My Mom, Sara Jane Shell Underdown, was/is the best mother a child could ask for. God truly knew what he was doing when he put her in my life. She was/is my best friend (I still talk to her everyday), my mother, my guardian, my heroine, and now my beautiful guardian angel. This has been a very difficult experience for me, but she helped create me, so her spirit is part of me. I choose to look on the brighter side of this tragedy, and celebrate the time I was blessed to spend with her. I never knew her to wake up in the mornings without a smile on her gorgeous face when she would wake me up in the morning. The song she would sing would be "You are my sunshine", which fit perfectly. She has been through thick and thin with me and will continue to do so. I have never met a more outgoing, caring, loving, smiling, beautiful person in my life. I know she is with me, and she will continue to be with me every step I take throughout my life. She has already begun to create miracles for me, and with the help of God, our Lord and Savior, she will continue to work with Him.

To my family: I pray for each and every one of you, that you will remember my mother in the way that she would want to be remembered. She wanted her family to stick together through anything and this is a time when ALL of us need to remember the great times we all shared with her. This is only temporary, we will see her again, and that smile will give us joy and peace for an eternity.

To my Mom: Mom, I love you sooo very much. I am infinitely proud of you. You put up a massive fight to stay here with us, but I understand why you needed to go. Distance is not an issue any longer, you are here with me now, helping me find the words to express how I feel (probably helping me correct my grammar). I miss you soooooo terribly much and I cannot wait to be with you again, forever. You are forever in my heart. I love you, my beautiful guardian angel. - Your daughter, Sara Lauren Moore

Sara Lauren Moore - July 15, 2009 at 12:00 AM

MH

“ To Sara's family and loved ones - my thoughts and prayers are with you and my deepest sympathy goes out to you. May the Lord bring peace to you during this time. She was certainly an inspiration to everyone with such a great spirit about her! I've never known anyone who fought a harder battle with a more positive attitude & sense of humor - what a wonderful person!

Melissa Harrell - July 15, 2009 at 12:00 AM

AS

“ Our thoughts and prayers are with you.

Patty, Greg, Gina, Gabriel, Andrew Allison, Jackson, and Laurel Shell

Andrew Sell - July 15, 2009 at 12:00 AM

MJ

“ *Nina & Carl,*
from the Newton family to yours we will pray for you in your grief.

Evelyn & Mel

Melvin Newton Jr - July 15, 2009 at 12:00 AM

CS

“ *I didn't know Sara very well, but what I did take away from our very first meeting was that she had an inner exuberance and a very welcoming personality. I'm sure everyone who knew her will miss her greatly. May she shine as bright in heaven as she did here on earth.*

Cheryl Smith - July 15, 2009 at 12:00 AM

MH

“ Chip:

Although I have not seen Sara for several years, I have kept up thru the First Presbyterian Church in Hickory grapevine. Looking at her picture (shown with this obit), I see the same spark that was just Sara. She was a firecracker . .who will be missed greatly. You are in my thoughts/prayers.

Mary Anne Dixon Hubbard - July 15, 2009 at 12:00 AM

PC

“ *I heard about Sara, Chip,and I am very sorry.Nothing I say will help but I have said a prayer for you and your family and will be thinking of you.Pete*

Peter Cook - July 15, 2009 at 12:00 AM

GM

“ *Chip,
Our thoughts and prayers are with you. We are so sorry for your loss.
Greg and Willie*

Greg and Willie Maxwell - July 15, 2009 at 12:00 AM

BB

“ *Chip, we are gong to miss her so much. But we know that she is in a far better place - she is with her Heavenly Father.*

Our prayers are with you and the family.

Brenda Bryant - July 15, 2009 at 12:00 AM

AB

“ Dear Chip,
Jan White Cantrell shared this news with me. I am so sorry for your loss. I am holding you and your family in the light.
Amy Brannock

Amy Brannock - July 15, 2009 at 12:00 AM

PJ

“ *To the Underdown Family:*

Thank you for sharing such an awesome angel with the Albany community. Sara was a wonderful asset, with a contagious swett spirit and always a champion for this community.

I was blessed beyond measure to know her and work with her during the start-up of the Snickers Marathon. She wanted to ensure that the youth were not left out and created a Fun Run component for them.

Her bright smile, cheerful attitude and love for people will make her greatly missed. We have truly lost a gem in this community.

Rest in Peace Sarah!

Pamela Green Jackson - July 15, 2009 at 12:00 AM

MB

“ Though not a close friend of Sara's, I was touched by knowing her. She was ill when I met her, but her humor, courage, strength, compassion and intellect could not be quelled. I won't soon forget her Rolling Stones mask. I am rejoicing in her freedom from pain and suffering, and hope that her family and friends will be comforted by God's gift of memory. I think God gave us a memory with all 5 senses; like a motion picture in full color, but added smell and touch so that when we miss someone, we can recall them at any time. I don't believe that Sara suffers anymore; it is our time to either grieve the loss, or feel as I do, so blessed by knowing her and happy that she is free of the battle she fought so bravely.

M.C. Brooks - July 15, 2009 at 12:00 AM

DE

“ The Roswell CVB expresses sadness at the loss of a wonderful tourism professional. Our sympathy is extended to her family and friends.

Dotty Etris - July 15, 2009 at 12:00 AM

LB

“ My heart and prayers go out to the family and loved ones of Sara. I had the privilege of meeting her and working with her to make Albany a prime destination for all to enjoy. Her smile and spirit were both contagious! May God grant you peace and comfort during this time. She will be truly missed.

LaKisha Bryant - July 15, 2009 at 12:00 AM

SB

“ *To Michelle and the rest of your family,
Please know my love and prayers are with you throughout your
grieving. Your mother was a great lady, a warrior, with a tremendous
capacity to love. And she will always be with you.
Love you,
Sissy*

Sissy Bowen - July 15, 2009 at 12:00 AM

JB

“ *We are very sorry for your loss and will keep you in our thoughts
and prayers.*

Jerry & Liz Bowman - July 15, 2009 at 12:00 AM

CA

“ *My thoughts and prayers are with you at this time. Sara was a truly
beautiful person and I shall miss her dearly.*

Carole B. Amick - July 14, 2009 at 12:00 AM

AM

“ To Chip and Sara's family- I never had the pleasure of knowing Sara on a personal level nor through our roles in the tourism industry, but I did have the opportunity to meet her, and Chip, in person when we were both being treated at MD Anderson in the fall of 2007. Being so far away from our Georgia homes and families made fighting our cancer battles difficult at times. So, the chance to meet someone from your own home state provided such a sense of comfort while journeying the tough road we both were traveling. What an unexpected blessing and a true example of divine intervention our chance meeting was! We met sitting in a diagnostic clinic waiting room at a hospital that takes up the size of almost 17 blocks in downtown Houston, TX. My husband and I sat together waiting on our names to be called out and in walked this couple...my eyes were immediately drawn to this masked woman's face...her eyes seemed familiar and yet surely, I couldn't know this woman. And then I saw Chips face, and realized that it was indeed the Sara Underdown that I had heard was also battling with cancer, a sister in tourism who I had been told about and read about on her caringbridge webpage. I recognized them from their caringbridge photos they had posted. I quietly watched them enter the room and as they both sat down, their backs facing ours, I reached out my hand to introduce myself to her and tell her who I was. I remember her first words to me, "How did you recognize me with my hat and mask on?" We shared our cancer war stories, talked about our families, and shared just a brief moment with each other. I consider myself lucky to have met her...even though I couldn't see her smile through her hospital mask, her eyes provided a warmth that lit up that waiting room. I never again had the opportunity to have that chance meeting with her again...our frequent visits for doctor check-ups and treatments never happened at the same time again. I continued to check on her progress thanks to the constant updates on her webpage and through Albany CVB friends. I was saddened to hear of her passing and my heart aches for her Chip, her family, her parents and her friends. I know it is not for us to understand why God chooses to call us home when He does. I know hearing the words "she is no longer in pain and she isn't suffering" doesn't

provide much comfort. The reality of knowing that Sara is no longer here with us is difficult to process, to accept, to understand...especially after such a long and brave battle she courageously fought. Her spirit throughout her journey remained so remarkably positive, hopeful and uplifting! May knowing that Sara touched the lives of so many, in such a positive and enlightening way, bring you a sense of peace and joy to your heart. Sara was an amazing and unwavering example of someone who loved her God, had faith that He would never take her to a place that she couldn't overcome and get through. Sara and her sweet spirit will forever live on. My deepest sympathy to her loved ones.
Angela Millett, Macon Convention & Visitors Bureau

Angela Millett - July 14, 2009 at 12:00 AM

SD

“ *My most heartfelt sympathy to Chip and all of Sara's family. She was a true shining star here on earth and now she has gone back to her home in heaven. She will be missed dearly by her many many friends.*

Stacey Dickson - July 14, 2009 at 12:00 AM

JS

“ *Chip and family, My thoughts and prayers go out to you. Sara's tourism family is going to miss her. She was truly one of a kind!*

Jeff Stubbs - July 14, 2009 at 12:00 AM

RH

“ *We'll miss Sara and her vibrance. The room just lit up when she walked in. We lost a great tourism friend. Georgia Visitor Center - Columbus*

Rita Hughes - July 14, 2009 at 12:00 AM

SH

“ Sara will live in our hearts forever. She was so very special to all of us in the Lemon-Aide's Friends organization. We will continue to fight cancer in her memory until there is a cure.

Sharon Herndon

Sharon Herndon - July 14, 2009 at 12:00 AM

JR

“ I will miss Sara very much. She always wore a smile. She was a fighter and an inspiration to everyone who had the pleasure of meeting her.

Judy E. Renfroe - July 14, 2009 at 12:00 AM

MH

“ Chip, Lauren, Page, and Family,
I am so sorry for your lose. Sara was a dear friend and one of the sweetest people you could ever meet. I will miss her dearly. I have fond memories of the times that we hung out at the beach and the times i kepted the girls. It was great working with her at the Chamber, infact she helped with me getting the job there, which i am thankful to her for that. If i can do anything for you, just let me know. I will keep you in my thoughts and prayers.

May God Bless you!

Mandy Holt - July 14, 2009 at 12:00 AM

LW

“ Sarah, you will be missed by everyone who knew you, and the hospitality industry at large.

Your friend in tourism,

Laura Walker
Columbus CVB

Laura Walker - July 14, 2009 at 12:00 AM

BT

“ Please accept our sincere condolences. We were great friends with Sara through LH Shag Club and through the Caldwell Chamber of Commerce. I last saw Sara when I accompanied Paul Broyhill to the Lenoir Rhyne award for her father in law. What a great personality she had. Her distinctive feature--her smile. While the earth mourns her loss, the heavens rejoice.

Bob Brady and Sheila Triplett-Brady - July 14, 2009 at 12:00 AM

WB

“ I will remember Sarah always for her warm smile, kind heart and uplifting, inspiring nature. It was a privilege and a joy to know her.

Wendy Bellacomo - July 14, 2009 at 12:00 AM

AR

“ Sarah was such a great childhood friend and neighbor. I have many wonderful memories of the fun rides to school together. Great person.

Andy Raby - July 14, 2009 at 12:00 AM

LJ

“ Chip and family I am so dearly sorry, Sara was so wonderful for Albany and we are blessed to have had her here. Love to you all,
Lou Johnson

Lou Johnson - July 14, 2009 at 12:00 AM

JJ

“ Sorry about your lost, we are going to miss her dearly. I had the pleasure working with Sarah at the Myrtle Beach Chamber, and was very abliged having her as a manager. Once again she will be greatly missed. We will continue to keep her family in our thoughts and prayers.

Jeanette Johnson - July 14, 2009 at 12:00 AM

CA

“ My little sister, my hero, my best friend....I love you and will miss you. No more pain, no more suffering, and all is well with your soul. Thank you God for giving me the time I had with you....you gave and taught me so much.

Carla - July 14, 2009 at 12:00 AM

NR

“ Thinking of You!
Nancy Reimer
CPC

Nancy Reimer - July 14, 2009 at 12:00 AM

VW

“ Chip,

I was very sorry to hear about Sarah.

I just got back today and just found out not to long ago. I will miss Sarah she was a very special person.

Please let us know if we here can do anything for you. We will talk to you in a few weeks.

Love Vickie White

Vickie White - July 14, 2009 at 12:00 AM

SL

“ *Simply the best: Best friend, best mom, best everything. There's some partying going on in Heaven today, no doubt about it.*

Susan Taylor Leathers - July 14, 2009 at 12:00 AM