

## Marlene C. Zinner



### The True-to-Life Adventures\* of Mar Mar, Woman of Mystery

One of the advantages of reaching the ripe ol' age of 84 is the ability to tell the same stories over and over, with each retelling more fantastic and embellished than the last. One of the advantages\* of being one of 12 offspring of said storyteller, is being the lucky recipient of these oft-repeated tales of glory.

(DISCLAIMER: Stories that include an asterick (\*), as relayed by Marlene, cannot be substantiated or unsubstantiated.)

Marlene Charlotte (Seiler) Zinner was born on April 11, 1936, the first of five eventual children of Charles and Marie (Roos) Seiler, in Scobey, Montana. As a child, she went to stay with her beloved Aunt Babe on Babe's farm near Flaxville, Montana. There, she learned to behead and pluck chickens\*, milk goats and cows\*, pitch hay\*, and chase the shadows of clouds across the rolling plains in a game of Hide 'n' Seek\*. She then rejoined her four younger siblings in Glasgow: Lois (Seiler) Marcinkowski, Charles Seiler, James Seiler, and Sherryee (Seiler) Turner. Local folklore has it that Marlene and her sister Lois were each pregnant with their first children whilst, at the same time, their mother Marie was carrying her last child.\*

Marlene grew up in Glasgow, Montana, where she was a popular\* baton twirler and majorette in white boots for Glasgow Sr. High School, then located off Highway 2 and since demolished to make way for the Scotty Pride Memorial Park, land of trees aplenty\*. She also crafted clothes for her sister Lois and herself during this time, leading to her lifelong passion for sewing, knitting, and crocheting until her "damn eyes and fingers gave out on her" due to diabetes. Soon after graduating high school, she was "discovered" working in the Wall Drug soda shop by the dashing Charles (Charlie, Chuck, Chuckles) W. Zinner, a former naval airman and gallant playboy\* about town who stole her away from a suave, handsome, debonair, available Air Force flyboy (name withheld due to licensing agreements)\*, convincing Mar to "step out" out with him. Envision Chuck's eyes rolling and his, "For corn's sake, Marlene!" here. Marlene and Chuck were blissfully wed on September 3, 1955, at St. Raphael's Catholic Church in Glasgow (imagine a photo of slim, young newlyweds here). As their life together grew, so, too, did their family. You know the saying, "Cheaper by the dozen"? Yes, well, THAT happened as they brought forth and welcomed 12 children into this world. THOSE children would eventually lead to 18 grandchildren and 14 +/-great-grandchildren, several foster children, 3 to 10 (give or take 7) foreign exchange students and stray children who wandered into their ever-burgeoning home on 5th Avenue North. (Side note: A classmate, not knowing it was our house, told us that the MAYOR lived in that big house. It was completely untrue (as that was Mayor ZELLER), but it tickled my parents!)

As a strict disciplinarian with a soft heart for innumerable pets (13 cats at one time!), taking care of friends, and putting up with Chuck's...ahem...Marlene's latest projects, her favorite saying was, "You're not too old to put over my knee and paddle...Greg, Danita...Kathy...whoever you are!" THIS claim can be substantiated.

Some of her passions included the American Legion Auxiliary (for whom she regularly volun-told her children to present various musical performances—sorry, Adeline Mitchell et al.); the St. Raphael's Altar Society and church (for whom she regularly volun-told her children to wash dishes and pick up the gym—sorry, Father Bill Cawley et al.); cleaning houses, caring for the elderly and ill at Valley View Nursing Home; and supervising children at recess (sorry—South Side School children, circa 1980s). In her "spare time," she loved to catch up on the news\* in the Glasgow Courier, cook like a professional chef (for 40), bake exquisite pies, can fresh, home-grown vegetables, bottle dandelion wine, make chokecherry jams and jellies, den-mother generations of Boy Scouts, educate children in the arts of sewing, and "coax" her children into EVERY possible category at the Northeast Montana Fair while they simultaneously labored at the Scotty Music Booster's booth in 100°F + weather, and "encourage" her children to swim in the 25°F-waters\* of Fort Peck Reservoir. "It's not THAT cold!"\* She also enjoyed "adjudicating" the singing skills of her family while on camping or road trips. "Someone is flat back there! (Cousin—name withheld due to embarrassment reasons—stops singing; Marlene, without looking,) That's better!" Claims are substantiated.

After losing her beloved husband Chuck (Chuckles) in 2010, Marlene took a risk and jumped into deep waters of her own. She moved to Aurora, Colorado, in 2012, with her devoted caregivers Teresa and Steven Zinner.

There, she regaled\* her new friends at the DaVita Dialysis Center with all the old stories her family had heard so many times before! Sadly, her large, generous heart could no longer be contained in her small body. She died of heart failure in her usual blaze of glory at The Medical Center of Aurora on Election Day, November 3, 2020, surrounded by several of her children and grandchildren. Luckily, she had been able to dazzle her fellow dialysis cohorts with her Princess Leia® costume just days before, on Halloween, hair buns and all. She was glad to have cast her final vote before passing. We believe she had some pull in the final outcome of the Presidential election.

Like all human beings in this beautiful mystery we call life, Mar Mar was not perfect. She fed and clothed anyone who needed it, but she was prone to temper. She was so very opinionated but willing to change her mind in the face of facts that contradicted her own beliefs. She demanded excellence but forgave easily. Most of all, she loved deeply, long, and well. And, in return, she was loved by all who met or knew her\*. Rest now, Mom; your work here is done.

Marlene is survived by her 12 children: Greg (Diane), Karl, Danita, Rob, Paul (Shawna), Teresa, twins Julie and Steve, Jeanine, Josephine (Ron), Kathleen (Dave), and Richard (Stan), her youngest sister Sherryee, 30-ish grandchildren and great-grandchildren, aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, nephews, and many people who called her “MomZ.”. Due to Covid 19 restrictions across several states, Marlene will be cremated in Denver, Colorado. She will be given a graveside service in Glasgow, Montana, and laid to rest beside her husband in the Spring of 2021.

Marlene’s final wishes were: 1.) World Peace\*; 2.) To teach the world to sing in perfect harmony\*; 3.) For everyone to wear a touch of plaid now and again (especially at her graveside service—she LOVED her Glasgow Scotties!); 4.) To meet her hero Alex Trebek (took care of that one!), and 5.) In lieu of flowers, to please have friends and family send a donation to the Marlene Zinner Memorial Fund, care of Kathleen ZinnerZwink via Venmo, PayPal, or Zelle. Katcan also be found at [katwomancarpediem@hotmail.com](mailto:katwomancarpediem@hotmail.com). An especial thank you to the doctors and nurses at The Medical Center of Aurora, the dialysis specialists at DaVita Dialysis Center of Aurora, and the wonderful Rachel Brown of Mile High Family Services, Denver, who was gentle and kind and made Mom look as lovely for Heaven as she ever did here on Earth.