



Martha Shelley Milner

November 9, 1961 - April 20, 2026

Dr. Martha Elizabeth Shelley Milner, 64, of Tifton, Georgia, passed away peacefully on April 20, 2026, at Southwell Medical in Adel, Georgia.

Martha was born on November 9, 1961 in Atlanta, Georgia to Oscar Lamar and Harriet Hudson Shelley. She was preceded in death by her parents; her beloved husband, James Milner, MD who passed away on June 7, 2024; and her grandson, Everhett Ronald-James Milner.

Martha lived a life marked by faith, intelligence, compassion, and determination. She was a Christian woman who deeply loved God, her family, people, and country. She had a lifelong passion for medical science, equestrian life, animal husbandry, and gardening. As a child, she especially loved visiting with her uncle, aunt, and cousins at the generational farm in Georgetown, Tennessee where her love of animals and farming was nurtured. Those who knew her will remember her zest for life, tenacity, sense of humor, and unwavering fortitude in the face of great physical adversity.

Growing up in Atlanta as a gifted student and musician, she received a scholarship to Berry College. Upon graduating summa cum laude and serving as valedictorian, she went on to attend the Medical College of Georgia at Georgia Regents University. Graduating in 1987, she dedicated her professional life to women's health.

Martha's academic and medical work included research in reproductive endocrinology: infertility, premature ovarian failure, and hormone-related ovarian and uterine research. In 1993, she was a co-author in *Fertility and Sterility* on research involving follicle-stimulating hormone beta gene structure in premature ovarian failure, with work connected to the Medical College of Georgia and Tufts University. In 1994, she authored an article published in the *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology*. She also shared her knowledge as an accomplished medical speaker at numerous conferences, contributing to the field through both research and professional education. Martha was a Paul G. McDonough Fellow, an honor connected to her research and to the nationally recognized work of Dr. McDonough in reproductive medicine and genetics.

With a brilliant mind and caring heart, Martha gave generously of herself to others. She helped provide medical care and procedures to underserved communities, often from her own pocket, so that people who otherwise may not have had access could receive needed care. Her family will forever be grateful for the excellent, even life saving medical counsel and service she so freely gave.

Surpassing her medical accomplishments, was Martha's love and devotion to Jim, her husband of 37 years, and their four children, Hayley, Sam, Logan and Emmalee. Having been homeschooled by their mom, each of the children went on to complete degrees in higher education and live lives of courage and character. She was known as "Mama Martha" to many friends and young people due to opening her heart any home to those that needed it. Also, near and dear to Martha's heart, was her ministry at Tifton First Methodist Church. As a member of over 20 years, she delighted in singing in the choir, playing violin in the orchestra, and ringing handbells in service to her Lord.

Martha is survived by her children, Hayley and Santosh Koirala, Sam Milner,

Logan and Chrys Milner, Emmalee and Zachary Hail, all of Tifton, GA and the surrounding area; her granddaughters, Elizah Jane Milner (Logan and Chrys Milner), Hazel Gonzalez (Christian and Kaitlyn Gonzalez); her siblings, Teresa Allison of Rogers, AR, Jim Shelley and wife Kathy of Sale Creek, TN, Harry Shelley of Atlanta, GA, Mike Shelley and wife Ena of Monroe, GA; many nieces and nephews who she loved and who loved her very much; her brother-in-law, Steve Milner and wife Pam of Dawson, GA; She also leaves behind Molly, her beloved, and ever faithful companion and service dog.

The family extends their utmost gratitude to Betty Jenkins, her longtime devoted domestic helper, friend, and who she called sister. As well as neighbors Joe Kunes, Rhonda Kunes, and Charley Taylor for their generosity and friendship over the years.

A memorial service will be held on May 3, 2026, at 2:00 p.m. at Tifton First Methodist Church, 107 West 12th Street, Tifton, Georgia 31794.

Honorary pallbearers will be Sam Milner, Logan Milner, Jim Shelley, Harry Shelley, Mike Shelley, Matthew Shelley, Santosh Koirala, Zachary Hail, and Steve Milner.

Services for the Milner family are under the care and direction of Reflections Cremation & Funeral Services, Tifton, GA. where condolences to the family can be given through the online guest registry.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in memory of Dr. Martha Elizabeth Shelley Milner to the First United Methodist Church of Tifton, GA for their service to be faithful to scripture, creative in ministry, passionate for outreach, and offering Christ to all. <https://www.tiftonfirst.org/give/>

Other donations may be made to The American Society for Reproductive

Medicine, supporting its mission in leading the advancement of reproductive medicine through evidence-based ethical practice, education, research, and advocacy. <https://www.asrm.org/about-us/about-asrm/donate/>

Upcoming Events

Celebration of Life Service

MAY 3. 2:00 PM (ET)

First United Methodist Church
12th Street
Tifton
Tifton, GA 31794