



Kay McAdams

December 1, 1942 - May 20, 2026

Kay L. McAdams December 1, 1942 – May 20, 2026

Kay L. McAdams, a respected businesswoman, dedicated community volunteer, and beloved mother, passed away on May 20, 2026, at the age of 83.

Born on December 1, 1942, in Memphis, Tennessee, Kay lived a life defined by determination, creativity, service, and a deep love for her family and community.

Kay was preceded in death by her parents, William Lee Leonard, Sr. and Dorothy Catherine Leonard. She is survived by her sons, Glenn Earl McAdams and Robert Cale McAdams; her brother, William Lee Leonard, Jr.; her sister-in-law, Liese Leonard; and her nephews, William Daniel Leonard and Mark Joseph Saporito.

A pioneering entrepreneur, Kay founded Earl Maxwell Homes in the late 1980s, naming the company in honor of her grandfather. Starting from the ground up, she initially built smaller homes in the East Memphis area before growing the company into a highly regarded custom home-building business. Through her vision, talent, and dedication, Kay designed and built distinctive custom homes ranging from 8,000 to 12,000 square feet. She continued her

successful career in home design and construction until the passing of her business partner in 2012.

Beyond her professional accomplishments, Kay devoted much of her life to gardening and community service. In 2002, she earned her Master Gardener certification and began more than two decades of volunteer work that left a lasting impact on the Memphis gardening community. She served as President of the Master Gardener organization from 2008 to 2009 and provided leadership for the Davies Plantation Plant a Row for the Hungry garden project.

Kay was also a cherished volunteer at the Dixon Gallery and Gardens, where she generously shared her time, knowledge, and passion for horticulture for more than twenty years. She co-chaired the organization's annual Spring Plant Sale for four years and became a familiar and welcoming presence to visitors and fellow volunteers alike. Her dedication helped strengthen one of Memphis's most treasured cultural and horticultural institutions.

Those who knew Kay will remember her for her entrepreneurial spirit, her generous heart, her love of gardening, and her willingness to share her knowledge

with others. Whether designing beautiful homes or nurturing beautiful gardens, she brought vision, care, and excellence to everything she pursued.

Kay's legacy lives on through her family, the homes she created, the gardens she helped cultivate, and the many lives she touched through her friendship, leadership, and service. Her influence will continue to bloom for years to come.

Family and friends will gather at Highland Heights Presbyterian Church, 2855

Morning Sun Road, Cordova, Tennessee, on Thursday, June 25, 2026.
Visitation will begin at 12:30 p.m., followed by a memorial service at 1:00 p.m.
to celebrate Kay's life and legacy.

She will be deeply missed and lovingly remembered.

Upcoming Events

Memorial Service

JUN **25**. 12:30 PM (CT)

Highland Heights Presbyterian Church
2855 Morning Sun Road
Cordova, TN 38016