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Kathleen Robertson

Jesus Mancera
jmancera163@marian.edu

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Photo by Jesus Mancera

Kathleen Robertson

A good neighbor and friend, I've known Kathleen Robertson since childhood. I met her through my uncle. When he would host summer cookouts, we would always see her there. She speaks Spanish too, so she fit right in. Kathleen is a sweet, loveable, and generous lady. She loves giving and helping others.

When you meet Kathleen her outfit catches your eye first. She is always wearing something unique, colorful, and bright like her giant garden. Her hair always looks the same - a grey shiny color that tells you how wise she is. Next to her you'll always see her dog, a short legged white chow-chow who she loves dearly.

Kathleen grew up in the 50's in an all-white neighborhood here in Indiana, where she describes, "there were few opportunities to meet new people outside her own group." This was something that from a young age bothered her and made her curious as to what it was like on the "other side" and made her question why everybody was not treated equally. From hearing and learning about this I could tell Kathleen from a young age was curious about the problems in our society.

One of my favorite things about Kathleen is how good she speaks Spanish. Kathleen learned Spanish after taking three years of Spanish at her high school. She then went on to use her bilingual ability to be an interpreter for her father, who was a dentist and had Spanish-speaking patients. Later in life she used this skill to work at the BMV in Lawrence Township, which has a high Spanish speaking population, and where her Spanish came in handy since she sometimes had to translate. She also was involved in the Latino Ministry at Saint Philip Neri Catholic Church where she improved and grew her love for the language. She credits Spanish and emphasizes the importance of learning a new language, as it helped her connect with new and diverse people. She says learning a new language can be hard and take time, but no matter how hard and long it takes to learn a new language, in the end it is worth it because of the people and connection a new language allows you to make.

Another talent Kathleen holds is her amazing art. Kathleen is an amazing artist which is reflective of her home that is filled with art pieces. Her passion for art started from drawing horses, which she loves and hopes to one day own. She first realized she was a good artist when she was a child. Her teachers and peers always complimented her work. Throughout her life, she has created many works of art, some of which you can see around her home. She also has painting and works of art in her garden, which people love to come see and admire.

Kathleen is also a big political activist. Being an activist, she has faced lots of adversity. One of her scariest moments took place when she encountered a group of armed motorcyclists that threatened her for protesting their candidate. She tells me she was very frightened but refused to stop protesting. She wasn't going to back down; she knew this is what she had signed up for, and when things get hard you must believe and stand your ground.

Another favorite part about Kathleen that I love is her car. Her car is filled with many stickers which immediately tell you where she stands politically. It signifies how she feels about current politics and is her way of protesting. Her car draws a lot of attention good and bad. On the one hand, people have gone out of their way to urinate on her car, but on the other hand people love what she is doing and the message she is trying to spread through her car. It also holds many stickers preaching to vote, as she feels very strong about exercising one's right since people suffered and died for us to have the opportunity.

Kathleen is a hero in my eyes because of her desire to help and inform others. She is outgoing and makes her voice heard through her symbolic car, amazing paintings and protesting. Above all, I truly appreciate that she said everyone has a gift to give. One of her gifts is the garden she has in our neighborhood; it is sort of a landmark in our neighborhood - a place of peace for people to come together and enjoy nature and works of art.