Maralyn J. Stewart (1937-2012) was a lifelong educator who devoted most of her career to Modesto City Schools.

Maralyn was born in Stockton and raised in Salinas. Overcoming a congenital heart defect that kept her in bed for over a year, she went on to excel in school. Despite the objections of her father who didn't believe women should attend college, Maralyn put herself through San Jose State, becoming the first college graduate of her family. After earning her credential in 1959 she spent three years teaching at Air Force bases in Europe where she used the opportunity to travel and explore diverse cultures.

Maralyn settled in Modesto in 1968, teaching at Mark Twain Junior High School. She attended CSU Stanislaus at night to earn a Master’s Degree in Psychology, becoming a guidance counselor, first at Mark Twain and later at Grace Davis High School. Later she was promoted to Davis' college counselor. She retired in 1997. During this time she touched countless lives and helped many young students realize their potential. In her later years she became a published poet.

Maralyn was active in numerous organizations including Phi Delta Kappa (Education Foundation and Scholarship Chairperson), Zonta International (former President), California Retired Teachers Association (Resource Volunteer and Scholarship Committee), Sylvan Club, Modesto Teachers Association, California Teachers Association, National Education Association and the Modesto School Counselors Association. Her honors included the PDK Service Award, Who’s Who Among American Teachers, and the Davis High School Educator Excellence Award.

Maralyn was a passionate supporter of the performing arts and a long time contributor to the Modesto Performing Arts, YES Company and the Gallo Center for the Arts where she also volunteered as a docent. She was a voracious reader and a friend to all animals. Maralyn enjoyed spending time with her son and his family and with her sisters, cousins and friends.