

## State of Confusion

*By Marilyn Reeves*

There must be at least a half dozen different ways to spell my first name, but the most common by far is M-A-R-I-L-Y-N with one N. Mine has two. Blame it on the baby names reference book of 1942 that my parents consulted when naming me. While I'm perfectly happy with the sound of my name, that unusual spelling has given me all sorts of grief, as I have to continually remind people to add that second N.

Things really became complicated after the State of Colorado misspelled it when I returned to Denver after having lived in Dallas for a couple of years in the mid-70's, while married to my second husband, Gil Brouse. For a while there, I was carrying a Texas driver's license with the moniker Marilyn J. Brouse. At least it showed the very best headshot of me that I had ever taken. Too bad I couldn't have kept that photo!

Somehow that name Brouse never really suited me, however, so after our brief marriage ended and I returned to Denver – son Tom and dog Cindy in tow – I not only had to get a new Colorado driver's license, but I decided to legally change my name back to Reeves. After many years I had gotten used to the name Reeves and it had the added advantage of being the same as my son's. So at that point, technically speaking, my full name was now Marilyn Jean Tuttle Reeves Brouse Reeves. Quite a mouthful! But since all those surnames weren't a legal requirement, I have simply been going by the name Marilyn J. Reeves, which seems to suffice in most cases.

Changing my name back to Reeves went without a hitch. The problem came when I received my new Colorado driver's license. Just as I was heading out the door of the DMV, I happened to notice a misspelling. They had gotten the name Reeves right, but not my first name. The clerk had spelled Marilyn with only one N. Apparently the license bureau had it on record that way and I had never noticed it before. But when I pointed out the error, I was told that I would have to go to the downtown courthouse to get a copy of my birth certificate – not the cute one with the lacy border and my little baby foot prints – but the 'official' certificate, if I wanted them to change the spelling. Well, I was fuming! I told them I ought to know how to spell my own name! But they wouldn't budge. So I decided to just let it go. And ever since then, my Colorado driver's license has shown my name as Marilyn with one N, even though I continue to sign it with two.

But the real vexation in all this is that I have never, ever taken another good looking picture for my driver's license, like the one I had in Texas.