



Gayle Strutz

January 25, 1957 - January 25, 2011

Gayle S. Strutz, 54, of Quinnesec, passed away on Tues. Jan. 25, 2011 at her home after a long battle with cancer.

Gayle was born on June 4, 1956 in Iron Mountain, the daughter of the late Eugene and Eleanore Duff. She has been a lifelong resident of this area and was a 1974 graduate of Kingsford High School. Gayle married Jim Strutz on October 20, 1979. She worked at the Daily News until she was no longer able to because of her illness. She was the proud and supportive mom of her daughter Toni. Gayle enjoyed bingo, hunting, fishing, spending time at camp and with family and friends.

She is survived by her husband, Jim; daughter, Toni of Portland, Oregon; sisters, Violet Bongi of Phoenix, AZ; Gerry (Dennis) Mattson of Iron Mountain; Susan Piatti of Iron Mountain and Pam Martin of Green Bay, WI; her in laws, many nieces and nephews and her dog taz.

In addition to her parents, Gayle was preceded in death by her sisters, Laurie Duff, Nancy Kienitz and Cindy Gustafson also by her brother in law Rudy Piatti and mother in law Elsie Strutz.

Friends may call on Friday from 2:00-5:00pm at the Tondin-Ross & Freeman Funeral Home of Iron Mountain. Funeral services will follow at 5:00pm Friday at the funeral home. Rev. Peter Erickson will officiate.

In lieu of flowers, a memorial will be established in her memory
A special thank you to her family and friends that cared for her as her illness worsened.

Condolences to the family of Gayle Strutz can be expressed online at
www.ernashfuneralhomes.com

The family has entrusted the Tondin-Ross & Freeman Funeral Home with the funeral arrangements.

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN 28. 2:00 PM - 5:00 PM (CT)

Tondin-Ross and Freeman Funeral Home
1117 Carpenter Ave.
Iron Mountain, MI 49801

Funeral Service

JAN 28. 5:00 PM (CT)

Tondin-Ross and Freeman Funeral Home
1117 Carpenter Ave.
Iron Mountain, MI 49801

Tribute Wall

LF

“ SO VERY SORRY TO HERE OF GAYLES DEATH. WE WERE FRIENDS IN GRADE SCHOOL AND HIGH SCHOOL. CANCER HAS AFFECTED MY FAMILYS WE NEED A CURE. GOD BLESS YOUR FAMILY REMEMBER SHE IS IN NO MORE PAIN

LORI MAAS - iron mountain, MI - friend - January 31, 2011 at 12:00 AM

AM

“ *Jim sorry to hear about your wife.. God bless you and ur family..wish the best of luck.. Love Ashley..*

ashley castor - kingsford, MI - January 29, 2011 at 12:00 AM

UC

“ *Sending our love and prayers during this difficult time. Enjoyed our visits with Gayle. A special gal. Love, Uncle Ed, Auntie Lou, and Family*

Uncle Ed, Auntie Lou and Family - Iron River, MI - Uncle, Aunt, and Cousins - January 28, 2011 at 12:00 AM

SC

“ *To: Jim, Toni, Violet, Gerry, Susie, and Pam*

*I am deeply saddened to learn of Gayle's passing.
Gayle worked at Loadmaster with our son, Kenn. She and Kenn had many a laugh together.
She will be greatly missed.....*

*God's Blessings
Sharon and Jim Dabb*

Sharon (Beaulier) Dabb - Sagola, MI - Cousin - January 28, 2011 at 12:00 AM

JF

“ i met gayle while we both worked at kmart we became good friends and continued being friends for many years. gyle was very special to me her acts of kindness shown toward me when i was ill will never be forgotten. i know she is resting peacefully now with no more pain and suffering. my deepest condolences jim, toni, violet and the other sisters. some day we will all be reunited.

JoAnn Johnson - iron mountain, MI - friend - January 28, 2011 at 12:00 AM

CF

“ My deepest sympathies to the family. There is now another awesome Angel who received her wings. Gayle will always be watching over you and be there for you. Just look up to the skies and you will feel her presence in your everyday life. Her memories will live on in your hearts forever.

Cheryl Tramontin - Iron Mountain, MI - friend - January 28, 2011 at 12:00 AM

TN

“ Thanks, Auntie Gayle for taking Jordan fishing and giving him such wonderful memories of you with him. We will love you forever! Gone but never forgotten!!

Tammy & Jordan - Niece & Great Nephew - January 28, 2011 at 12:00 AM

MD

“ you have my sympathy and prayers...
Marsha

Marsha bonicatto - Iron Mountain, MI - friend of daughter - January 28, 2011 at 12:00 AM

EF

“ You surely touched our life in such a sweet, gentle, caring and fun way. Know that we will miss you beyond words and feelings can express. May God fill Jim, Toni and all your family members up with strength and fun filled memories from this day forward. Love always
Emily and Gene

EMILY AND GENE SPARAPANI - friends - January 28, 2011 at 12:00 AM

BA

“ Gayle you are missed already i know we didn't always keep in touch but i always knew u were there when we got reunited last year it felt like we never lost contact.... and to top it all of you got me the man of my life... and accepted and luvd him like he was part of our faimly..... THANK U we both luv u and will miss you tremendously!!!!

bucky n chris - aunt - January 28, 2011 at 12:00 AM

JW

“ Jim & Toni, My sympathies to you in the loss of Gayle. She started out as a co-worker, ending up being a great friend. She touched our lives in so many ways. She is free of the cancer that stole her away and will always be a guardian angel for everyone who knew her. Take care of each other. Thoughts & prayers are with you always.

Jennifer Flynn - Kingsford, MI - co worker/friend - January 28, 2011 at 12:00 AM

BC

“ Jim and Toni ~ Gayle was such a beautiful person. She was truly one-of-a-kind. So kind and loving, never wanting anything for herself and always giving to others. Oh, how we will miss her today, tomorrow and forever.

Becky Rose - Kingsford, MI - Friend and co-worker - January 28, 2011 at 12:00 AM

“ The Dragonfly Story

Down below the surface of a quiet pond lived a little colony of water bugs. They were a happy colony, scurrying about doing waterbug chores in their home, far away from the sun.

"Look!" one of the water bugs to another one January day. "One of our colony is climbing up the lily stalk. Where do you think she is going?"

Up, up, up their friend slowly went until she disappeared from sight. Her friends waited and waited but she didn't return...

"I don't understand!" one said to another.

"Why did she leave...wasn't she happy here?" asked a second.

"Where do you suppose she went?" wondered a third.

"I will miss her and I will never forget her," said another.

Finally one of the water bugs said. "I have an idea. The next one of us who climbs up the lily stalk must promise to come back and tell us where they went and why."

"We promise," the group said solemnly.

About a year later, the very water bug who had suggested the plan found herself climbing up the lily stalk.

Up, up, up she slowly went until she disappeared from the view of her waterbug friends.

Before she knew what happened, she had broken through the surface of the water and fallen onto a broad, green lily pad.

She couldn't believe the change that had come to her body in the warmth of the sun. She now had four silver wings and a long tail.

She moved her new wings and suddenly found herself flying above the water. Swooping and dipping in great curves, she flew through the air, excited to be..... a dragonfly. By and by she landed

happily on a lily pad to rest. She chanced to look below to the

bottom of the pond. Why, she was right above her old friends, the

waterbugs! There they were, scurrying about doing waterbug chores in their home, far away from the warm sun. The dragonfly

remembered the waterbugs' promise: "The next one of us who

climbs up the lily stalk will come back and tell where they went and

why." Determined to keep her promise, the dragonfly darted down.

Suddenly she hit the surface of the water and bounced away. She tried again. And again. Sadly she realized that as a dragonfly, she could no longer go into the water.

"I can't to back to them!" she said in dismay. "At least I tried. Even if I could go back, not one of the water bugs would know me in my new body. I guess I'll just have to wait until my friends become dragonflies too. Then they'll understand what has happened to me, and where I went."

"Hello," she heard behind her and turned to see a colony of dragonflies. She gasped.

"You are my family and friends from the pond, aren't you?" she asked.

They nodded their dragonfly heads. "Yes, we are, and we have been waiting for you."

And with those words of welcome, the new dragonfly winged off happily into its wonderful new world of sunshine.

We who are left in the pond will miss her and we will never forget her.

DM Teeber - January 28, 2011 at 12:00 AM

LH

“ I am so sorry for your loss. I feel very fortunate to have gotten to know Gayle over the years while doing her hair. I enjoyed every visit with her and hearing all about her family which she shared with me. She will be missed. Sorry i cannot make her funeral as i will be out of town. Take care

Lisa Halvas - iron mountain, MI - hairdresser - January 28, 2011 at 12:00 AM

LF

“ To the Duff/Strutz Family and Friends: Meeting back up with Gayle at our 30th Class Reunion in 2004, that was a special evening. We all had realized, we were no longer Young in our bodies. Our Futures were still on the horizon, but for that evening, we felt so invincible. Now 7 years later, Our Gayle has risen to the occasion of Honorable Citizen of Dickinson County and beyond. Her toughest times were here remaining days and nights on Earth. When this monster called Cancer returned, it had come back in a more Ferocious Way. Gradually it stole what all of us knew, who Gayle was about. Thank You to all of you for sharing your Gayle with all of us. Looking forward to spending time with all of you in Celebration of Gayle Duff Strutz. She now has her Honorable Wings to be there for all of us through Prayer. Let us go in Peace and Harmony, as once were strangers, now as Friends, as Gayle would want us too. God Bless All Of You.

Lori Kitslaar - Luxemburg, WI., WI - Good Friend/Classmate - January 28, 2011 at 12:00 AM

CS

“ Gayle was such a kind, caring and sensitive person. As a co-worker, she would always be there to help with whatever you might have on your plate. As a friend, she would be there, if you needed to bend an ear, or share a wink at life.

I will always cherish the laughs, the memories, and that warm, enveloping hug on my last day of work.

My thoughts and prayers are with all of Gayle's family and friends.

Fondly,

Catherine Stang

Catherine Stang - January 28, 2011 at 12:00 AM

DF

“ So sorry for your loss, Gayle was a very strong and special person. Hold on to all the good memories. She was so proud of you Toni (Smiley). It's so hard to say goodbye but you know she isn't hurting anymore. May God keep his arms around all of you at this time. You are in our thoughts and prayers.

Debby and Pat Sullivan - Friend - January 27, 2011 at 12:00 AM

SI

“ Gayle was the sweetiest person,do anything for anybody. Feel soo bad this cancer took her life soo young..Just not fair. I will miss her dearly. Love You lots Gayle,your in my heart forever.

Susie Piatti - ister - January 27, 2011 at 12:00 AM

JC

“ My thoughts and prayers to Gayles family. What a wonderful person she was.

Jenni Lindstrom - Co-worker - January 27, 2011 at 12:00 AM

EM

“ To All of Gayle's family, we are saddened for your loss. May the love of family and friends help you through the days ahead and may the wonderful memories you have keep her spirit alive in your hearts forever. You are in our thoughts and prayers. With love & God's Blessings, Sharon & Es

Esley & Sharon Mattson - Munising, MI - January 27, 2011 at 12:00 AM

MF

“ Toni..Jim...Susie and all...I am so sorry for your loss. May all of your precious memories be your strength at this difficult time.

Know that you have a Guardian Angel in Heaven watching over with much love.

MARY R. OMAN - Friend of the family - January 27, 2011 at 12:00 AM

DC

“ Sending caring thoughts and prayers. With sincere sympathy in the loss of Gayle. We share your loss. Love, Dan and Sue

Dan and Sue Passamani - Cousin - January 27, 2011 at 12:00 AM

DF

“ You will be missed greatly. . . May God strengthen and comfort your family in the days ahead.

David and Cindy Duecker - friends - January 27, 2011 at 12:00 AM

MF

“ Toni~
My deepest sympathy to you and your family. It is such a bittersweet time, she is no longer suffering but she will be deeply missed by you and many others. You are in my prayers.

Marie Johnson - Friend - January 27, 2011 at 12:00 AM

TL

“ Toni & Jim and all Gayle's immediate family:
This world was a better place because Gayle was in it. She was a special lady and undoubtedly left you all with many beautiful memories. We are saddened for you because of the hole that will be left in her passing. She has blessed all of us who had the privilege to be a part of her life and family. My deepest sympathies, and thoughtful prayers will be with you in the days ahead.

All our Love,
Terry and Laura

Terry and Laura Strutz - Green Bay, WI - Sister in law - January 27, 2011 at 12:00 AM

SC

“ Gayle was always so caring...willing to do anything for anyone. So sympathetic and would lend an ear when she sensed it was needed. She is missed. My thoughts and prayers are with you all.
Suzanne Anderson

Suzanne Anderson - Iron Mountain, MI - co-worker - January 27, 2011 at 12:00 AM

GS

“ To my sister Gayle who will be sadly missed from now on. So much good times thru the years, Jim & Toni yous have our deepest Sympathy. Ger & Den

Gerry & Dennis Mattson - Sister - January 27, 2011 at 12:00 AM

PL

“ Dear Jim, Toni and family,
We are so very sorry for your loss of Gayle, wife, mother, sister and friend.
Our thoughts and prayers are with you.
Pat & Beth LaVigne

Pat & Beth LaVigne - January 27, 2011 at 12:00 AM

VF

“ *Jim and Toni.*

We will miss Gayle very very much. She was such a great person, and friend. She would do anything for anyone. We will never forget you Gayle. Love Violet, Jennifer, Lilee , douglas and brian

violet, jennifer, lilee, douglas, and brian - SISTER. niece, and friend - January 27, 2011 at 12:00 AM