



Helen Burke

July 30, 1921 - January 15, 2014

On January 15, 2014, my mother, Helen Burke, died at the age of 92 years young. My mother lead an interesting, full life and her family and friends will miss her dearly.

Helen was born July 30, 1921 in Racine, Wisconsin to James and Helen Duffy. She loved dancing, especially tap and told me she had wanted to be a famous dancer like Ruby Keeler or to dance with the Rockettes. During World War II, my mother worked in a factory where she met and fell in love with my father, Emmett Burke. When my father joined the Marine Corps my mother followed him to San Diego, California where they were married.

After the war, my parents returned to Racine. Helen was the only mother on the block who would do cartwheels and back bends – all while wearing a skirt.

My parents moved to Oshkosh, Wisconsin in 1969 and lived there for about 4 years before moving to Iron Mountain, Michigan in 1977 when my father changed jobs. They drove a bright, yellow Corvette, loved to dance, golfed as often as possible and threw a great party. My mother called herself a big city girl and moving north was a huge change for her. But the community of Iron Mountain embraced my parents. They became members of St. Mary Queen of Peace and loved attending Mass and supporting the Church. Helen worked in the church office often – loved going to work. I often suggested that my

mother move closer to our family, especially after the death of my father in 1996, but she said her social life was in Michigan. She and her girlfriends celebrated birthdays and holidays. They helped each other through the deaths of husbands and through medical challenges. Packers games were an excuse to get together to eat and drink – I don't think anyone knew what the score was but they had fun just being together.

My husband Ron and I will miss my mother's Irish sense of humor and the great brandy old fashioned she made. Our daughter Angela and husband Jake live in Cypress, Texas with their children Chloe and Jacob. Jake gave my mother her first ride on Angela's Harley Davidson motor cycle. Gabrielle and husband Phil and their daughter Madeleine live in New Glarus, Wisconsin. On January 24, 2014 a new great granddaughter Savanna will arrive and we know Gabrielle and Phil will tell Savanna about Great Grandma Burke and how thrilled she was to be a great grandmother. And that Great Grandma thought chocolate was one of the major food groups. Hallie has a boyfriend Matt Dicks and lives in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. Grandma called Hallie her free spirit – I think Hallie reminded my mother of herself.

My family and I thank Martha Plumley, Janet Fiorazo, Betty Glanville and all of the many friends who made my mother's life so full and rich.

We will miss my mother for many reasons but most of all because she was the best mother, grandmother and great grandmother ever. I know my mother and father are dancing and playing golf, and my mother is wearing her gold shoes, has her nails polished red and a tissue tucked into her sleeve, just in case.

Please join us in celebrating the wonderful life of Helen Burke on Friday, January 17, 2014 from 5:00 to 7:00pm at the Kingsford Funeral Home. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated on Saturday morning at 10:00am at St. Mary Queen of Peace Catholic Church with Fr. Paul Nomellini presiding.

Burial will be in Dickinson County Memorial Gardens.

Condolences may be expressed to the family of Helen Burke online at www.erickson-rochon-nashfuneralhomes.com

The family has entrusted the Erickson-Rochon & Nash Funeral Home with the funeral arrangements.

Cemetery Details

Dickinson County Memorial Gardens

Hwy U.S. 2
Iron Mountain, MI

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN 17. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Kingsford Funeral Home
1000 S. Carpenter
Kingsford, MI 49802

Mass of Christian Burial

JAN 18. 10:00 AM (CT)

St. Mary Queen of Peace Catholic Church
432 Edsel
Kingsford, MI 49802

Tribute Wall

LA

“ Sincere condolences for your loss. Cherish loving memories of laughter and times spent together that are now something to be treasured. Proverbs 17:22 says "a joyful heart is good medicine", therefore, may those memories bring you joy and warm your heart. Death is an enemy of mankind, and it has a devastating effect on family and friends. But, can you imagine reading a newspaper with the headline "DEATH IS NO MORE!!!!" Wouldn't that be a wonderful time? That very promise is found at Revelation 21:4: "And he (God) will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more...." The tears spoken of here are not tears of joy and happiness, but tears of mourning, outcry and pain. Along with that promise, we find the hope of the resurrection of those who have fallen asleep in death at Acts 24:15, and you can have full confidence in these scriptures, because Titus 1:2 says "God cannot lie". May Jehovah, the Father of tender mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our trials (2 Corinthians 1:3,4), comfort you in your time of need. (tallchea@att.net)

Laura - February 17, 2014 at 06:54 AM

HD

“ Thank you to everyone with your kind words about my Grandmother Helen. She was an amazing person and she will be greatly missed. Thank you for celebrating her life with us. I will share with you some words of wisdom from Helen herself...

- Don't buy green bananas. You never know if you'll be around to enjoy them.
- Don't go to dinner...go to dine.
- Chocolate and regular coca-cola are the secrets to a long and happy life.

Hallie Detjen - January 24, 2014 at 09:08 AM

LL

“ I was very sorry to hear Helen had passed away. She was a very sweet and caring person, as was her husband Emmet. I always enjoyed being with Helen and know your memories of her are the wonderful legacy she leaves. I'm glad for you that you had her as long as you did to add to those memories. Lyn Lehmann

Lyn Lehmann - January 21, 2014 at 08:51 AM

HH

“ Terry and I loved your mom. She was such a wonderful person and so fun to hang out with. She will leave a big hole in all our hearts. She and your dad are in Heaven, reunited and dancing the night away. You are in our prayers.

Howdine Hendrickson - January 17, 2014 at 08:33 PM

MS

“ So very sorry for your loss, Helen sounded like a very special and unique women. I know from the stories told she leaves alot of special memories for you to hold onto! Please accept my deepest sympathies and know my thoughts and prayers are with your family!



Michele Schroeder - January 17, 2014 at 03:50 PM

KI

“ Kim, Greg, Walt and Cass Reinhart Partners Inc. purchased the Medium Dish Garden for the family of Helen Burke.



Kim, Greg, Walt and Cass Reinhart Partners Inc. - January 17, 2014 at 11:34 AM

JN

“ I am so very sorry for your loss. I know, based on the stories I enjoyed hearing about her life, that she will be truly missed, but that she led a wonderful, full life. My thoughts and prayers are with you during this most difficult time. Joy N.



Joy Novotny - January 17, 2014 at 10:22 AM

CS

Dear Family of Hlen Burke,

I had not met your Mother until reading her obit in the Oshkosh paper this morning. She sounds like a woman way before her time! All in a good way. Doing the cartwheels and bend overs in a skirt made me grin. Keep these and the many other fond memories tucked in your hearts now and for ever. Thank you for sharing the light of your Mother with the rest of us lucky enough to know her, even if just in print. May God bless you and keep you in his grace.

Sincerely,

*Cathy Spiegel
Oshkosh, WI*

cathy Spiegel - January 17, 2014 at 11:09 AM