



Donna Marie Richards

May 24, 1933 - August 18, 2016

Donna Richards

TRAVERSE CITY – Donna Richards, age 83, of Traverse City, passed away Thursday, August 18, 2016 at the Munson Hospice House in the loving care of her family. A visitation will take place from 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm on Monday, August 22, 2016 at the Reynolds-Jonkhoff Funeral Home. Funeral services for Donna will take place on Tuesday, August 23, 2016 at 11:00 am with a one hour visitation prior at the Reynolds Jonkhoff Funeral Home. Graveside services will take place at the Maple Grove Cemetery in Elk Rapids at 1:30 pm on Tuesday, August 23, 2016.

Cemetery Details

Elk Rapids Maple Grove Cemetery

Elk Rapids, MI

Previous Events

Visitation

AUG 22. 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Reynolds-Jonkhoff Funeral Home
305 Sixth St
Traverse City, MI 49684
info@reynolds-jonkhoff.com
<http://www.reynolds-jonkhoff.com/>

Visitation

AUG 23. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Reynolds-Jonkhoff Funeral Home
305 Sixth St
Traverse City, MI 49684
info@reynolds-jonkhoff.com
<http://www.reynolds-jonkhoff.com/>

Funeral Mass

AUG 23. 11:00 AM (ET)

Reynolds-Jonkhoff Funeral Home
305 Sixth St
Traverse City, MI 49684
info@reynolds-jonkhoff.com
<http://www.reynolds-jonkhoff.com/>

Graveside Service

AUG 23. 1:30 PM (ET)

Elk Rapids Maple Grove Cemetery
Elk Rapids, MI

Tribute Wall

DR

“ Mom was a pillar of love and compassion. There were so many times her patience was tried and she was always the model of understanding and compromise. It was never about self to her it was about family. Her guidance in my life was the biggest gift she ever could have given me and I will cherish it forever. I will miss her unwavering love on this earth but it will continue in my soul for eternity. I love you Mom.

Darrel Richards - August 23, 2016 at 07:46 AM

DR

“ My loving thoughts and hugs are with you all this week as you say goodbye to a very special lady. I loved her with all my heart. She was gracious, poised, fair, loving, gentle, and strong. Michele, Terry, and Darrel, I know she will live forever in your hearts. I am praying for your peace and comfort today and always. "Skip" aka Diana Ryan

Diana Ryan - August 22, 2016 at 12:01 PM

JR

“ JUDY RICHARDS is following this tribute.

JUDY RICHARDS - August 20, 2016 at 05:53 PM

CO

“ Rest in peace aunt Donna. You will be missed by many. Terry, Darrel and Michele I am so sorry for your loss. I will always remember the times we had in the grandma and grandpas trailer. All of us in there having fun. Also, the times when we would come to the boys house on Hathaway road. Love you guys. Prayers sent your way.



cindi (Lahr) o'donnell - August 20, 2016 at 03:13 PM

NL

Hugs and prayers for all of you! My memories of Aunt Donna are that she always had a smile for everyone and a hug...she made us all feel special!! She was beautiful inside and out! We loved her so much!!!

nadine lengacher - August 22, 2016 at 11:13 AM

MR

“ (continuation of post below) There is so much grief in the long goodbye of dementia. Watching my mother slowly collapse into a puddle has been more excruciating than I care to admit. And I have the additional sadness that my littlest will never know the peach-pie-sweet soul that was my mother. Yet, I have this gift that my mother, born into the deep poverty of the Depression and the deprivation of a broken family, was able to give to me and now I can share with Hazel. Every night when we read to her before bed one of those nearly antique books makes Hazel's self-selected material. In those moments I get to pass on that small piece of a woman who for my first seventeen years gave me all she had and more.

Michele Richards - August 20, 2016 at 10:08 AM

CO

I know that feeling oh so well. When dad was still with us. I was so glad he got to see his sister before he went to heaven.

cindi (Lahr) o'donnell - August 20, 2016 at 03:15 PM

“ The last day of my Mom’s stay in the rehabilitation facility I sat and held her sleeping hand for an hour. As so many mother-daughter relationships are, ours was fraught with low points and filled with more easily forgettable high points. Yesterday’s tears brought back one of those bright spots.

I have three daughters, two in their late teens and a two year old. My lucky older girls got to have much more Grandma in their lives. She even lived with us for a year and was their care provider while I worked. That was a bonus I never expected to have. She grandmothered the way we all wish we had, full of love and generosity. My little one, unfortunately, only knows a grandma whose dementia-fueled scoldings of said toddler keep the visits with her brief.

In that house that we lived in with Grandma, with my previous husband, were stashed many boxes my Mom had offloaded to me when she moved from her northern home into the mobile home she would share with my deceased father’s brother for many years (with the exception of the year she lived with us). I didn’t open them when they came, just stuck them in our basement. And when I divorced my previous husband, I moved them into my new garage, still unopened. 8 years later, cleaning out that garage, I finally opened them. I knew they would have memories. I just didn’t know what kind.

My Mom wasn’t a hoarder, but she was sentimental about stuff. There were points in my childhood where she lost, again, lots of treasures she adored. Avon collectibles, china, earthenware and untold beloved things in a fire sale auction when we moved north. A handkerchief collection my foolish child-self cut up to make clothes for my dollies while she wasn’t watching. And so many things lost from her family and childhood, from a life that began with so little love, food, and safety. Somehow, though, through all those points she managed to save my books and my scrapbooks from my earliest days on.

My parents weren’t educated. Both stopped school at the end of 8th grade, for different reasons. My Mom because of the transience of her divorced parents and my Dad because it was either stop or get kicked out for cowboy behavior. I know for sure my Mom was whip smart. The teachers she had long enough to know her said so, and she shared those stories with pride on occasion. The transience, and early marriage (she was barely 16) and motherhood at 18 ended the possibility of anything else, though, especially in the 1940’s.

Despite all that, and with no public service messages at the time telling parents in the 70’s that reading was important, and books were the answer, my Mom still got me lots and lots of books. Both from the dime store and the little Scholastic book orders that would eventually come home from school. I know, because they still have labels on them in 2016. And somewhere in early elementary, when the Dewey Decimal System was taught, and little cards came out of the backs of books where you signed your name to check them out, I decided that my books should have a place to sign your name, too. Inside the front cover of most of my childhood books in felt tip pen is written “Name”. And sometimes I would sign my mom’s name because she was checking out a book from the library in my essentially only-child world.

From those seeds a lifelong love of books and learning grew. To this day when I have a problem I start looking up references, or reading fiction that helps me feel

like someone knows what I'm dealing with. I was able to stand on those shoulders of my sweet mama and get an education unprecedented to that point in my family. I received a priceless gift from a Mom who probably didn't even know how ahead of the curve she was. In those boxes lived the physical manifestation of that foresight.

(continued in next post)

Michele Richards - August 20, 2016 at 10:07 AM

PE

“ *When Donna Richards (her grand-daughter) graduated from high school, her Dad had a party for her, my son Sean got a grass stain on his pants, I was not happy about it. Donna told me before I washed his pants to pre-soak them with Dawn dish soap. I had nothing to lose, but a stain, so I did it, Darn it worked. Till this day I kept Dawn dish soap by my washing machine, when I have a stain to remove I think about the wise lady that told me how to remove a stain. She was a very kind, always had a smile, wise, loving woman she will be missed by many.*

Peggy Edwards - August 20, 2016 at 07:34 AM

MR

“ *Donna Marie Richards (83) passed away at Munson's Hospice House on 18 August 2016.*

Donna was born on 24 May 1933 in Ft. Wayne, Indiana to Ralph and Hazel Lahr. She attended Leo High School and married Billy M. Richards on 28 May 1949 at the LaOtto Methodist Church.

While living in the Hometown, Indiana area she was a loving and involved mother. She also worked at Ajax Industrial Supply Company as a finisher of small seized diamond dies that were used for the wire drawing industry.

After moving to the Quincy, Michigan area she was employed at the Acorn Products Company until her husband began distributing for Little Debbie Cakes, and Donna worked with him in partnership.

They moved to Kewadin, MI late in life where they built and operated Billy's General Store until 1990. Donna retired and in 1998 moved back to Quincy, MI. Donna joined the US Coast Guard Auxiliary in April of 1990 and trained as a boat crewman. During the summers 1990-1996 she served aboard the approved facility by the USCG, St. Ignace. She is also a member of the Coldwater United Methodist Church and the Fremont Indiana Moose Lodge.

Preceding her in death was her husband, Billy, her father and mother Ralph and Hazel Lahr, her brother Eugene Lahr and her granddaughter Amanda Richards. Donna is survived by her sons Terry L. of Sturgis, MI, Darrel D. (Theresa), daughter Michele Richards (Peter Brakeman), five grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

Michele Richards - August 20, 2016 at 07:20 AM

JH

“ I have fond memories of Aunt Donna more unfortunately when I was younger. As times ho and we start our own families it was hard to stay in touch with her! But one particular memory was about 8 years ago I had major back surgery and it did not go well! Sweet Aunt Donna crocheted me a couple dish cloths and matching little magnet butterflies. She include a beautiful message and sent it with Uncle Charlie when he came down to see me. Those butterflies have been on refrigerator ever since!! Often when I go to the refrigerator to get something I smile and think of Aunt Donna's love!! Miles have separated us over the years but our love doesn't change! I loved your mother and your daddy very much!! Always had a kind word and a big smile!!

Julie Hostetler - August 19, 2016 at 01:44 PM

MB

“ As my neighbor for many years, I have many memories of Donna and her family. Setting in the lake in her lawn chair enjoying a martini, visiting in the yard, bringing a package to my door that somehow ended up in a ditch and she found on her walk, entrusting her little girl with me when they took a weekend away. Have missed seeing her walk down the road with her stick and a bag and picking up trash along the road on her afternoon walk. Going to her house and her showing me pictures of Michele's little (now in college) girls and seeing her beam with pride. Her family will be in my thoughts and prayers. May you all find peace and know she is now dancing with Bill again. Her mind is whole again and she carries each one of you in her heart and she in yours.

Mary Beek - August 19, 2016 at 01:43 PM

JR

My mother in law made me feel so welcome into the family when I married her son. She always said she gained a daughter. My husband and I had two daughters and we lived four homes away from my in laws. I would feed my girls then they would go see their grandparents. Grandma would ask them if they ate and they would say no, and mom would feed them again. I would go over there and ask them why you are eating again. They would say Grandma said to sit down and eat. Mom would just laugh. That's my girls. People would have problem with the in law. I've always loved her and will miss her. She will make a beautiful ANGEL.

Judy Richards

Judy Richards - August 20, 2016 at 09:45 AM

MR

Those last two sentences say exactly what I've felt a lot since she passed. She's whole again and even though I don't have my physical Mom, I feel her presence and spirit again in wholeness, and indeed dances with Dad in the light.

Michele Richards - August 26, 2016 at 12:22 PM