



May Purvis

March 17, 1925 - October 15, 2021

May Purvis, 96 of Traverse City passed away October 15, 2021 at Orchard Creek Assisted Living, surrounded by her loving children.

May was born on March 17, 1925 in Lake Leelanau to the late Andrew Peter and Nellie Christine Nelson.

May grew up on the family farm alongside her siblings Orlean, Herbert and Jane. She had many fond memories from her childhood. Her family was always thrifty and to the end she was never wasteful and could always find a use for something.

During the war, May was a true Rosie the Riveter. She moved to Toledo, Ohio where she worked in a factory as an inspector. On the weekends she would take a train and a bus to Detroit to stay with family and when the war ended, she moved back to Leland.

On April 3, 1948 May married Richard Philip Purvis at the Immanuel Lutheran Church in Leland. May was a devoted stay at home mom, but she was so much more than that. In addition to caring for her kids and keeping up with housework, May was very active in the community. She was the office manager for the family business, Purvis Brothers Steel Fabrication and Repairs. After they sold the business, she went to work at the NMC bookstore and retired after ten years of service. May was involved as a den mother for cub scouts and was active at Eastern Elementary in the PTO. She would often take her kids fruit picking, whether it was for cherries, strawberries or blackberries; she loved to eat fruit. She would often can it with a healthy dose of sugar for the family to enjoy all year long. She and her neighbors also liked to go for walks around the civic center.

May and Rich were members of Central United Methodist Church for over 50 years. Here she made many friends and was the head of the rummage sales and helped with many holiday bazaars and in the kitchen for family night meals. She was part of the women's society and service circle. She and Rich were also members of Yoke Fellow group. She also was a dedicated Sunday School teacher where she shared good Christian education

with all of the kids.

May will be remembered for her brave, stoic, generous and kind spirit.

May was preceded in death by her beloved husband of 73 years, Rich; her parents, siblings; and granddaughter Kimberly Forsyth.

May is survived by her children Steve (Andrea) Purvis, Christine (Gordon) Forsyth, David Purvis, Deborah (Paul) Newhouse and Mark (Pamela) Purvis; grandchildren Kelly Forsyth, Maria, Neil and Richard (Erin) Purvis, Lisa and Callee Newhouse, Emily (Jordi) Llore, Nicole (Billy) Beecher and Andrew (Cindy) Purvis and great grandchildren Dawson, Gavin, Lilly, Finn, Max, Mario, James, Colin, and Walter. She was greatly looking forward to meeting her next great grandchild due in November.

Visitation for family and friends will be held on Thursday, October 21, 2021 from 5 to 7 pm at the Reynolds Jonkhoff Funeral Home.

Graveside services will take place at Swedish Mission Cemetery in Good Harbor on Friday, October 22, 2021 at 11:00 am.

Memorial contributions may be directed to Hospice of Michigan (10850 E. Traverse Highway, #1155, Traverse City, MI 49684) or to the Cherryland Humane Society of Traverse City.

Please share your memories here on this online guestbook.

Cemetery

Swedish Mission Cemetery

S. Manitou Trail

Good Harbor, MI, 49653

Events

OCT **Graveside Service** 11:00AM

22

Swedish Mission Cemetery

S. Manitou Trail, Good Harbor, MI, US, 49653

Comments



“ Send BEAUTIFUL Flowers Locally to the family of May Purvis. Express your condolences, giving comfort and support. [Click here to view selections on our website](#)

Send Flowers - October 19, 2021 at 04:10 PM



“ Christine and family
May our loving Lord put His arms of comfort, strength, love and peace around all of you. Your Mother was an amazing woman. I'm thinking of you during this time.

Darlene Miller



Darlene - October 24, 2021 at 02:12 AM



“ Christine, Steven, Deb, Dave & Mark, My condolences for the passing of your lovely mother. May Purvis was a wonderful example to each of you and to those of us who had the pleasure of knowing your family . I loved reading of all the various activities your mom was involved in and fun to learn of her being Rosie the Riviter. May always did her part. She generously gave her time and energy to others, a blessing to many in our community. God bless her, your mom is forever with your dad and loved ones now.

Judi Carboneau Crane

Judi Carboneau Crane - October 21, 2021 at 08:09 AM



“ May was a jewel in our neighborhood as well as the greater Grand Traverse area. I've thought to myself since learning of her death, "one never knows the friends we meet by attending NMC." Because of meeting her daughter Christine, and our mutual friend, Judi Carboneau Crane through college classes, I began a friendship with May that has remained with us until her passing. Christine invited us to her parents' home, and of course we met the whole family. We were hooked from then on to share many years of good times and the heartaches of the sad times too.

I recall returning to NMC to take a few refresher courses to assist me in the working world, and there was May, along with another jewel in our community, Kay Groszek, doing service to the college students in the campus bookstore. It struck me then, as it remains with me today that both of them had helped their spouses in business, raised their children, served the community with the Boy Scouts and welcomed anyone in their respective churches while assisting families whenever possible, and now they were helping future generations. What a twosome they were! So cute and friendly!!! They were a joy for college students of any age to encounter, and receive encouraging words promoting continued learning for all times, Their smiles and positive beliefs in students did not go by the way side.

There are many more recollections I have of May, as do others, but will end this note by saying, "the hand that rocks the cradle, rules the earth." Your mother and dad together did the best they could in raising you. We should all be so lucky to have the salt -of- the earth parents who helped you remain a family that stays together, prays together.

Thank you May and Rich for your examples of what we are called to be on earth, then moving on to HIS journey in what HE has prepared for those who love HIM.

My condolences to all the Purvis family. I'm proud to have been a small portion of huge contributions I witnessed from your parents. That being said, they loved you most of all. Please carry on their legacies, for it is good.

Sincerely,

Mary Miller Orth

mary orth - October 20, 2021 at 05:31 PM



“ Beers & Stilwill Family Dentistry & Staff purchased In Our Hearts Lavender for the family of May Purvis.



Send Flowers - October 20, 2021 at 03:46 PM



“ I met the Purvis Family the winter of 1957, when I joined Troop 36 as Webelos Boy Scout. That spring, my folks began to build our current house, next door to Rich and May. Thus began 64 years of a very rewarding friendship. Rich and May were very supportive of Boy Scouting, for which Rich was awarded the District award of Merit and the Silver Beaver award. For me it was more personal. Rich was my Scoutmaster and May my scout Mother at Courts of Honor. My patents had a conflict on Scout Night, so when I received an award of rank, May would come unto the stage and pin my badge on, I would then pin the mothers version of the badge on her. Just as she did for her boys. I made her keep those badges as she had taken my Mothers place, and I felt the badges should be hers. When I was older and an Asst. Scoutmaster and Asst. District Commissioner, they praised me and encouraged me. What a great kindness. May was a wonderful cook and baker. Rich praised her thin flakey pie crust . Her pies were simply wonderful. Thanksgiving and Christmas always featured crescent rolls that were the best ever! What most didn't know was that May was very allergic to flour, and would sneeze and get red eyes whenever she baked. So she made a personal sacrifice to bring so much pleasure to others. I can't think of any better example of how Rich and May's sacrifice meant to our community. God Bless
Carl Van Conant

Carl Van Conant - October 20, 2021 at 01:33 PM



“ My condolences to the whole Purvis family in the loss of another family matriarch. Grandma Purvis welcomed me into her home several times growing up. She was always very welcoming and filled our bellies. I'm sure her and Grandpa Purvis are rejoicing together again. (Heather Sexton - Friend of Nicole Purvis)

Heather Sexton - October 19, 2021 at 08:46 PM