



Rosanne Fifarek

July 24, 1948 - February 5, 2016

Rosanne Fifarek, age 67, passed away, Friday, February 5, 2016, at Munson Hospice Home, Traverse City, Michigan.

Rosanne was born to Robert L. and Dorothy A. (Chase) Fifarek on July 24th, 1948, in Traverse City, Michigan.

She graduated from Manistee High School in 1966, and Michigan State University, in 1970, with a Bachelor of Arts in English Education. Rosanne also received Master degrees in High School Education and High School Administration from Michigan State University.

Rosanne taught at Webberville Community Schools, teaching in the areas of Language Arts, History, Theater and Journalism. In 2003, after 33 years of teaching, she retired. Rosanne relocated to Traverse City and continued her career as a substitute teacher for seven years.

Rosanne was born to teach. She shared her passion for literature, theater, and the written word with all of her family, friends and the thousands of students that entered her classroom. Along with her love of her family and friends, Rosanne greatest interest was travel, sharing her adventures with her sister, traveling through Great Britain and Europe, cruising Hawaii and the Caribbean, and multiple trips across the United States and parts of Canada.

Rosanne was preceded in death by her parents, Robert and Dorothy (Chase) Fifarek; paternal grandparents, Joseph and Anna (Kelenski) Fifarek; maternal grandparents, Raymond J. and Rosa (Brezina) Chase; and her grand-niece, Sophia Rose Fifarek. Rosanne is survived by a sister, Mary Jo Fifarek, of Traverse City; and two brothers, John Fifarek of Haslett, and James (Jan) Fifarek of Grand Rapids. She is also survived by her former sister-in-law, Lori Hydeck of Sarasota, Florida; five nephews and nieces, Dr. Chase (Katie) Fifarek of Venice, Florida, Dr. John Fifarek, Jr. of Sarasota, Florida, Lauren Fifarek of West Palm Beach, Florida, Sara Fifarek of Grand Rapids, Michigan, and Kalli Fifarek of Southfield, Michigan. Rosanne is also survived by the newest family members, two grand-nieces, Ellie Alona and Eva Noel Fifarek and numerous cousins and close friends.

The family would like to thank Deacon Rene Hoenscheid for his spiritual support and caring attention. The family would also wish to express gratitude to the staff of Munson

Hospice House for their gentle care of their sister during her last few days.

Visitation for Rosanne will take place Friday, February 12th, from 5 - 7 pm, with a rosary to follow, at Reynolds Jonkhoff Funeral Home.

Visitation will also take place from 1 - 2 pm, Saturday, February 13th at St. Patrick Church, Traverse City, MI, with the funeral mass celebrating Rosanne's life beginning at 2 pm, with Father Greg McCallum officiating. Burial will follow at Oakwood Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be directed to Munson Hospice House or Saint Patrick Church.

Please share your favorite memories of Rosanne with her family by posting to her tribute page at www.reynolds-jonkhoff.com.

The family is being cared for by Reynolds-Jonkhoff Funeral Home and Cremation Services.

Cemetery

Events

Oakwood Cemetery

1325 East Eighth Street

Traverse City, MI,

49686

FEB

12

Visitation

05:00PM - 07:00PM

Reynolds-Jonkhoff Funeral Home

305 Sixth St, Traverse City, MI, US, 49684

FEB

13

Visitation

01:00PM - 02:00PM

St. Patrick Catholic Church

630 S. West Silver Lake Road, Traverse City, MI, US,

49685

FEB

13

Funeral Mass

02:00PM - 03:00PM

St. Patrick Catholic Church

630 S. West Silver Lake Road, Traverse City, MI, US,

49685

Comments



“ Rosanne's service on Saturday was inspirational for me. See you one day my friend.

gregg King - February 16, 2016 at 01:19 PM



“ I joined the Webberville staff in the fall of 1979 as the MS/HS librarian and worked with Rosanne until her retirement in 2003. As all of these lovely tributes prove, she was an amazing teacher, friend, and mentor.

I don't think a year went by that she was not thanked and praised by a student in a graduation speech. To repeatedly win such respect and admiration from young people - well, that is indeed a major accomplishment! Those accolades were a beautiful testimony to her teaching skills and her devotion to those in her care.

As for the staff... we often looked to her as our “fearless leader”. If anyone had their finger on the pulse of the school, it was Rosanne. If we were uncertain how to proceed, she would know what to do. I recently described her to someone as “a force to be reckoned with” because she knew who she was and what she stood for. If you ever had a question, she had an answer - and it was the RIGHT answer, too. :)

And when she wanted to make a point, she could do it like no other. In my early days of teaching, I rarely wore my glasses in the library – I mainly needed them for driving, or so I thought. Then one day when she was in with a class doing research, she held up a magazine from half-way across the room and asked me how far back the issues went. Struggling to make out the title, I hesitated too long. So she quoted me the well-known adage, “Vanity, vanity, thy name is woman.” And from that day on, I wore my glasses full time!

Dear Mary Jo and the rest of your family,
Please know that you have been and continue to be in my thoughts and prayers.
May God bless and be a comfort to you ~

Joyce Felzke

Joyce Felzke - February 15, 2016 at 01:56 PM



“ Mary Jo, John, James,
So very sorry for the loss of your sister... May our Loving Lord wrap His arms of comfort and love around you... He knows how very close you were to Rosanne. My prayers are with all of you.

Darlene Miller



“ My deepest condolences to the family and friends of Miss Fifarek. She was one of my favorite teachers at Webberville HS and taught me so much there. I'll never forget the fun times I spent rehearsing for our play productions or working on the Yearbook with her. She always had a way of bringing out the best in every student and the world could use many more teachers like her. May you rest in peace, Miss Fifarek, and know that you were truly loved by your students. You will be missed!

Brenda (Darnell) Cantrell

Brenda Cantrell - February 09, 2016 at 08:14 PM



“ I was a high school student of Ms. Fifarek's in 9th and 10th grade in the early 1990s at Webberville High School. She taught English and world history and was in charge of the journalism, yearbook and, at the time, the brand-new theater program. I was involved in and enthused about all of it – because of her. She was part of an amazing armada of engaged, talented and truly caring teachers and staff members at tiny little Webberville HS at the time – and I was so lucky to be a part of it.

When you reach the ages of 15-16-17, you need great teachers around you to recognize and foster your talents and abilities – because that is the time like no other that you have to start recognizing them yourself, and start making decisions. Ms. Fifarek – somehow! – made dry subjects like grammar and world history not only tolerable -- but fun!

I'll never forget the video (yes, VHS video) projects we all did for world history in 10th grade. My group of friends – still my best friends in the world – played anchors and reporters in ancient Greece, broadcasting the greatest (and funniest, the way we played it) historical events of the day.

And Ms. Fifarek laughed and laughed and laughed during the viewing of that video, which was an A++. But that was her magic as a teacher – she knew she how to draw out the best in all of her kids like that. Because that's the way we learned the best, and that was a turning point in my own motivation. I knew I could act, write, film – and it was OK to be a nerd in love with art and history.

Over my life, I've pursued careers in theater, music and writing – pretty much all at the same time. I've settled on writing and editing lately, and I remember a day in 9th grade, putting together our little school news letter, writing something off the wall for it. I remember her recognizing it's brilliance for what it was – and laughing. And being amazed. And in turn, giving a shy kid who moved around a lot and never really felt fully accepted anywhere I went – feel accepted and brilliant.

Ms. Fifarek was a brilliant teacher, and I feel so lucky and grateful to have been her

student. She combined art, history, writing, literature, theater and who knows what else she developed over the years after I left. Because of her, those brief two years with her and my classmates still seem like yesterday. They will never be forgotten.

Erin Schultz - February 09, 2016 at 07:54 PM



“ My Mom and I got the pleasure of getting to know Rosanne. Her passing is very sad. She was a wonderful, strong, smart woman and we will miss her deeply. Much love to her family. ? Karla and Kathy

karla - February 09, 2016 at 04:48 PM



“ Dear Mary Jo and Family,

I am sorry to learn of your sister Rosanne's death. How I recall meeting and talking with both of you many times throughout the years.

May your faith sustain you as you continue in life without your beloved sister, until you are joined again in His house. Thoughts and prayers go out to all of you.

Sincerely,

Mary Miller Orth

mary - February 09, 2016 at 01:03 PM



“ As a high school freshman, I remember trying to avoid Ms. Fifarek's classes because I was afraid that I couldn't make the grade, pun intended. I quickly learned I had no choice as she taught so many of the required language arts classes. I wasn't much of a student until Ms. Fifarek brought out the student in me that I didn't even know existed. She was tough, honest and fair. She instilled confidence in me, and believed in me, before I believe in myself. At that point in my life I hadn't even considered going to college, fortunately for me, she helped me realize the importance of a college education. Ms. Fifarek made school fun and for that I will be eternally indebted to her. I'm a better person because of her.

My condolences to her family, she will be greatly missed. It's said that when we lose a loved one, we are left only with their memories and those memories become our treasures. Ms. Fifarek leaves us rich with treasures.

Rest In Peace Ms. Fifarek.



“ Rosanne was a wonderful friend throughout grade school and high school. Although I hadn't seen Rosanne in quite a while, I will always remember the fun times we had. Our 50th class reunion would have been this coming summer. Rosanne will truly be missed.

Joyce Rozmarek LaFleur

Joyce LaFleur - February 08, 2016 at 08:58 PM



“ My sincere condolences to the family of this great lady. I think of Miss Fifarek often, especially when I am trying to speak or write properly! I remember her sense of humor and kind smile. She always encouraged me to be my very best. Webberville was blessed to have had such a fine educator and human being serving it's children for so many years. May God bless you, Miss Fifarek!

Kimberly Shaulis Benway - February 08, 2016 at 12:57 PM



“ She was a wonderful teacher! I had her for journalism. She made a good difference for alot of students in Webberville and we are all better for you knowing her. Prayers for comfort for her family!

Nora (Deisler) Stanton - February 08, 2016 at 09:28 AM



“ Ms. Fifarek will be remembered fondly and surely be missed by many. I, for one, will never forget her winning smile. May God be with you.

Rosalie (Baughan) Marshall

Rose Marshall - February 08, 2016 at 08:43 AM



“ I always looked forward to seeing Rosanne in the dental office. I could always count on a nice conversation based on where she might have traveled or what was going on around town. Love and peace to you, Mary Jo, and to the rest of your family.
Diane Meadows

Diane Meadows - February 08, 2016 at 08:27 AM



“ So many great memories of Miss Fifarek as one of my teachers at Webberville. She was great and what she did and taught me a lot. She touched so many lives and for that she will never be forgotten! RIP Miss Fifarek

Monica Troshak - February 08, 2016 at 05:16 AM



“ Miss Fifarek was a teacher who inspired many students to reach beyond themselves. She was funny, insightful and a lifelong learner who modeled an inquisitive, open mind. She laughed easily, listened with intent and cared deeply about all of her students. She will be missed by many. Even all these years out of high school, I remember her fondly.

Nettie Monroe - February 07, 2016 at 07:55 PM



“ Miss Fifarek... What an awesome teacher we had at Webberville with you! The talent you saw in the youth even when we did not believe in ourselves at times! You were always stern, very stern when needed, but the confidence you provided to your students throughout the years, from theater to photography to journalism and so much more! You always had kind words or those who needed them as well! We have definitely lost a jewel on Earth but Heaven has gained another great Angel!!! R.I.P. Miss Fifarek <3

Lisa (Reeder) Grant - February 07, 2016 at 07:18 PM



“ A great teacher and inspiration. There are not enough words to express how many lives she made better through her love of teaching and her patience. Her classes and her guidance made me a better student and person.

David Holmes
Webberville Class of 81

David Holmes - February 07, 2016 at 06:46 PM



“ Miss Fifarek was a very tough but inspirational teacher with a great sense of humor. I will never forget the day she read a story I wrote out loud to our English class...such a little thing but what it did for my confidence...priceless. Thanks Miss Fifarek for instilling in me the belief I could pursue my dreams. (and I know there should be some commas in there??? but since you always told me I used way too many...I left

them out)
Carol (Fraley) Carrasco

Carol Carrasco - February 07, 2016 at 04:54 PM



“ Rosanne will truly be missed. she is a tribute to the wonderful family that she comes from. my deepest heartfelt sympathy. the wonderful summers that I spent visiting her and her family in traverse city will always be a precious memory.

douglas cheadle - February 07, 2016 at 03:43 PM



“ Just the other day I was asked who my favorite teacher had been. It was impossible to name just one! My fondest high school memories are of Ms Ffarek's English and Mr Wheeler's Horticulture Class. The best teachers lift you up and help you realize your potential, all the while believing in you sometimes more than you believe in yourself. Every college paper, letter to a friend and Christmas card has had a piece of Ms Ffarek's hand in it. As I'm writing this now, I'm re-reading it and wondering how it would be graded. And...that's my point! The Ms Ffarek's and Mr Wheeler's of the world have had a profound impact on our lives! Rest In Peace, you wonderful woman, and may your family find peace in knowing how much you are loved!

Tricia Conroy Moilanen

Tricia Moilanen - February 07, 2016 at 03:22 PM



“ Such a great teacher. Was not afraid to tell you like it was. She taught me how to properly pronounce the word chocolate, which was quite a challenge for us both! I will miss her. May she rest in peace.

Rosanne Brewer - February 07, 2016 at 02:59 PM



“ I'll never forget this conversation! What great memories at Webberville. This would have been 1985 or 1986.
I was so cocky and she was so patient. She saw something in me and built my confidence by casting me as Oberon and then Dracula. She understood kids and knew how to speak into their lives.

Me: "I really don't want to do 'Our Town.'"

Ms F: "Why?"

Me: "Because it looks boring, stories about people in a small town. It would be too common and predictable. I'm all about new and exciting things. I want to live a life

that nobody could predict."

Ms F: "So Mark, do you think you and Kathy will get married?"

Me: "Of course, why?"

Ms F: "You're from a small town and you want to marry your high school sweetheart."

Me: "What's your point?"

Ms F: "Never mind."

BTW, Kathy and I will celebrate 30 years of marriage in September.

mark temple - February 07, 2016 at 02:48 PM



“ Ms Fifarek was my favorite teacher in the early 70's. She left an impact on me for life. Tough as nails, soft as putty. I never did address her by anything but Ms. Fifarek, even after I graduated and became an adult (old school respect). My sympathy to the family and our community.

Tina Choszczyk - February 07, 2016 at 12:40 PM



“ Favorite Ms. Fifarek quote: "This is not Madame Fifi's Hair Salon." Said to any girl caught repeatedly fluffing her hair during the day's lesson.

Thank you for sharing your love of the English language with us. Your lessons live on in all your students.

Kate Torres - February 07, 2016 at 12:18 PM



“ When I first met Ms F it was tuff. She expected the best from her students and somewhat demanded it. My first encounter with the tuff side of her was when we had to write a very long piece for History when she teamed up with the history teacher to teach the proper way to write the thesis paper. I can remember writing that paper until I was sure each an every part was right only to find out i had left a couple of comas out frustrated and upset she told me to come back after school and she would work with me to get it right. Right I did the paper took on an A and a smile from Ms. F. All that time she knew I could do it I had to just believe in myself. From that point on I knew that the lesson was not of workds and puncturing a paper but to believe in my self that I could do anything I wanted if I just believe in me. Rest in peace Ms. F you will always be remembered and loved.

Bethany Cooper - February 07, 2016 at 12:01 PM



“ Ms. Fifarek was so many things. She was intelligent, caring, driven, stubborn, funny, reliable and an educator. She is so fondly known as a teacher, but she taught more than just text book education, she taught life lessons as well. She wasn't afraid to stand her ground and tell you what she thought, whether you wanted to hear it or not :). She believed in her students and did so much for us. She was truly amazing and will be remembered as one of my favorite teachers. Sending hugs, love and prayers to her family and all who loved and cared for her. Thank you, Ms. Fifarek for being you- a huge blessing to our school and community.

Heather - February 07, 2016 at 11:36 AM



“ Ms. Fifarek was an amazing person and teacher! I will never forget the many things I've learned from her, ranging from the fundamentals of grammar and English, as a whole, to literature, journalism, and some theatre. She also was a big supporter of my musical endeavors and budding interest in art, which was a big encouragement to continue in them. We've lost a truly amazing person, but her legacy lives on in all of us who were fortunate enough to experience her.

Chris - February 07, 2016 at 11:35 AM



“ Ms Fifarek was an amazing teacher! She made me realize my love for journalism and writing. Even though it took a lot of work on her part to straighten out my grammar, she still took the time to truly make me a great writer. She still rings in my ear every time someone says "me and Johnny", and right away I say what she always said, which is "it's Johnny and me"! She will be missed, but her lessons will always live on!

The world lost an amazing person. My thoughts and prayers to her family and friends.

Joshua Rockey - February 07, 2016 at 11:25 AM



“ Deepest condolences to all of you. Another great teacher gone too soon. Thank you for pushing students to be better people, sharing your adventures and advice and always going that extra mile! Your laugh still echo the halls at WHS. RIP Ms. Fifarek, you will be remembered always <3

Becky - February 07, 2016 at 11:18 AM



“ Rosanne was my best friend in high school. We were part of a group of 6 young ladies who were good friends--Rosanne, Georgia, 2 Jane's and 2 Diane's. We produced our high school yearbook, planned activities and filled out college applications together. After college, Rosanne and I used to fly to New York to see Broadway Productions paying as much as \$25.00 for a ticket--that was a lot in 1977. She was a great friend whom I will miss.
My prayers go to Joey, Jim and John as well as their families now. You need support as you travel this road of loss.

With love and prayer,
Diane Livingston

Diane Livingston - February 07, 2016 at 11:10 AM



“ So very sorry for the families loss. She was an inspiration for several students through out her teaching career at Webberville High School! Prayer to All!! She will be missed!

Christina Reeder-Riggs - February 07, 2016 at 11:08 AM



“ Ms Fifarek helped me realize my love for photography. As a sophomore, she handed me the only camera the journalism class had and said "let me know if you don't know how to use it" she never assumed what you didn't know, but made you realize what you were capable of. I always think of her now when I manage to capture that great shot you weren't trying to get. The world lost an incredible person.

Shannon O'Neil-Lyons - February 07, 2016 at 10:58 AM



“ Mary Jo, John, Jim & Family,
Our most sincere prayers and thoughts are with you all during this difficult time as we share comfort in knowing she is in the hands of God, Uncle Bob and Aunt Dorothy. I find solitude in reminiscing of the times and laughter we shared over all the years in Manistee and especially at the cottage. I can't help but think of one most recent one where we were all on the patio at the cottage, in the sun having cocktails and sharing memories and laughs when I mentioned one of mine. Many years in the 60's when we traveled from Battle Creek to Traverse City to celebrate Christmas we would frequently stop in Manistee on the way for the Fifarek Christmas Party. Each time I was so excited knowing when I arrive, Aunt Dorothy would give me a Shoe Box wrapped in Aluminum Foil with a red ribbon and packed with luscious goodies and cookies. Upon mentioning this long time memory Rosanne & Mary Jo laughed and chuckled. To my dismay Rosanne then eluded that Aunt Dorothy never baked anything in her life and all those cookies and goodies were prepared by both her and

Mary Jo. You can't imagine my surprise and the look on my face which I'm sure she treasured.

Obviously there are so many more memories I could share that place her in a warm and loving place forever in our hearts.

She is gone but never forgotten.

With much Love and Sadness....Steve & Colleen

Steve & Colleen Chase - February 07, 2016 at 10:50 AM



“ Ms. Fifarek was one of the most important teachers in my life. She was strong, fair, and not afraid to push a student to do better, now! She encouraged me to do more, try more, read more, regardless of what the standards were - she knew to raise the bar. She made an incredible impact in my life, and I credit some of my success to her drive and belief in me. I will miss her even more, knowing such an incredible person is no longer on this realm. My condolences to the thousands she helped, and especially to those friends and family who were close to her.

Jennifer Leitch - February 07, 2016 at 10:19 AM



“ Roseanne had a laugh that was infectious , we will miss that. She was loved by so many people but is greeted in Heaven with open arms by all who are waiting. She was a very special Lady that Gary cared deeply for, our prayers and hugs go out to the entire family. Love Gary , Doralie and family..... Love to you all xoxoxo

Doralie Chase - February 06, 2016 at 08:17 PM