



Suzanne Garthe

September 20, 1920 - May 27, 2013

Suzanne Garthe is now dancing in heaven, after suffering a stroke on Tuesday, May 21 and leaving this world on Monday, May 27. She was born on September 20, 1920, the 7th child of 13 born to Stanley and Mary (Darga) Peplinski, in Isadore (Cedar), Michigan.

Sue was a person of extraordinary character. She was sustained for 92 years by her pre-dawn walks, morning mass at St. Francis, six children, a large community of friends and admirers, and a strong set of personal beliefs. She viewed the world with a calm, steady gaze through sky blue eyes.

Sue created a sense of abundance even in times of need: if there was any excuse to laugh, hers filled the room; if there was music, she made it a dance; if there was an odd number of card-players, she changed the game and continued playing; if there was an unexpected hungry mouth at the table, she set an extra place and stretched the food; if there was pain, she walked it off; if there was a needy neighbor, she baked something and went next door. What she was and what she had, she shared with others (whether they asked for it or not!).

Sue was a multi-tasker before the term was invented. She would pick apples while waiting to tee off at Elmbrook Golf Course and later bake a pie with crust so light it would fairly float. While cooking a holiday meal, she would keep the grandchildren occupied by tying aprons around their waists, opening the enormous flour drawer and letting them run their hands through the silk-like substance. Her baked goods were legendary; she said that was because the flour had been sifted by angels. Though she was willing to share her recipes, she never could be exactly certain about the ingredients – a person just sort of had to decide if the moment called for a pinch of cinnamon or a dash of salt.

In November in the Bahamas, she danced the last dance near midnight, in Count Basie Square. In the week before she suffered the stroke that would end her life, she was still living life to the fullest, doing her favorite things: playing cards, hanging at the Elks Club bar on Tuesday, and dancing on Friday and Saturday to Tom Kaufmann's music at the Top

of the Park, all with her fond companion, Al Kuepfer.

Surviving Sue and her husband Don, her husband of 64 years who passed away in June 2006, are Norma (Joseph) Drasiewski, John Garthe, Donald a/k/a Pete (Frances) Garthe, Roberta (Leonard) Gross, Paulette (Grant) Parsons, and their very special son, Peter Joe Garthe.

Sue and Don's 14 grandchildren are Joe E. and Don Drasiewski, Timothy (Emily) Garthe, Thomas Garthe, James Garthe, Jill (Alex) Garthe Protzel, Susan Garthe (Paul) Siembeda, Christine Garthe (Shawn) Veenstra, Patty Garthe (Todd) Harvey, Father David Gross, Douglas (Tina) Gross, Cathy Gross (Eric) Buehler, and Emmy and Margaret Parsons. There are 17 great-grandchildren, with more to come. Those who missed meeting Sue will learn her legend over time.

Sue's surviving siblings include John Peplinski, Jean Lawson, Rita Gomes, and Margaret Skeba. Preceding her in death were siblings Benedict, Clement, Edwin, Betty Zielinski, Sophie Laskey, Leona Kasben, Stanley, and Theresa.

Visitation for family and friends will take place Thursday, May 30 from 5 to 8 pm, at St. Francis Catholic Church at 1025 S. Union Street in Traverse City. A funeral mass will be celebrated at 10:30 am on Friday, May 31 at St. Francis, with visitation starting at 9:30 am. Burial will take place at the Grand Traverse Memorial Gardens.

Memorial contributions in Sue's name may be made to the Father Fred Foundation. Please share with her family your memories of Sue by way of her online guestbook at www.reynolds-jonkhoff.com.

When you buy your Cherry Festival pin from Peter Joe this summer, give him an extra pat on the back and tell him a Sue Garthe story. She was a truly remarkable person, and Peter is proof of that.

Cemetery

Events

Grand Traverse Memorial Gardens
3575 Veterans Drive
Traverse City, MI, 49684

MAY 30 **Funeral Mass** 10:30AM

St. Francis Catholic Church
1025 S. Union, Traverse City, MI, US, 49684

MAY 30 **Visitation** 05:00PM - 08:00PM

St. Francis Catholic Church
1025 S. Union, Traverse City, MI, US, 49684

Comments



“ Dear Garthe and Peplinski Families,
We send our most sincere condolences to all of you on the loss of your dear Suzanne. What an accomplished person she was, such a giving person, definitely a very creative person! She was filled with faith and joy ... just the right combination to take life as it comes, and truly make the best of it.

We moved into the neighborhood of her brother Edwin and her great parents Stanley and Mary, in the early 1970's, and loved to stop by and visit with such inspiring oldsters. Our Peplinski connection went on with being Holy Rosary parishioners with sister Sophie and Theresa, enjoying their gifts of baked breads and goodies in the spirit of their mother Mary.

My (Judy's) connection goes even to Sue's children, dear Paulette at St Francis School, and wonderful Peter through his and my many years of service to the National Cherry Festival. He always greets me with a friendly kiss and such an upbeat attitude, for sure the result of his mother's love. One more life connection was when Sue rehabbed at the Pavilions from a broken bone (ankle/wrist?) from a fall, at the same time my mom Thelma Weber was there for her back surgery recovery. Many many wonderful encounters and commonalities over the years, a blessing for sure. Sue's sharp mind, and kind and loving heart were evident to anyone who encountered her.

Please know that we will always hold Sue and her family in our highest regard, and will keep her and all of you in our prayers. May she now rest in peace in the loving arms of our Lord, in her deserved reward of Paradise.

Fondly,
Judy and Glenn LaCross

Judy LaCross - June 01, 2013 at 01:25 PM



“ May God bless Peter Joe and members of the Garthe family with fond memories of Suzanne. You are in my thoughts and prayers as you follow her wonderful example in your personal lives.

Gary K. Sanborn



Gary K. Sanborn - May 29, 2013 at 04:34 PM