



## Mary Nickson

September 25, 1965 - May 23, 2021

Mary Nickson ~ Beloved mother of Kristina, daughter of George and Marie Nickson. She passed away on May 23, 2021 surrounded by her family. After a long battle with cancer. Mary leaves behind her brothers: Milan, and Christopher (Ava); nephews, Nicholas, Niko, and Christopher, niece, Nicole, with many loving family and friends. Mary graduated from Eisenhower High School, Utica, Michigan and Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan. She went on to become an Associate Director at the Zell-Lurie Institute for Entrepreneurial studies at the Ross School of Business at University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan. She also taught Sunday School at St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church in Ann Arbor and went on to become the Director of Sunday School at St. Lazarus Serbian Orthodox Cathedral "Ravanica" in Detroit, Michigan. Mary was a devoted mother, daughter, sister, and friend. Mary will be sadly and deeply missed by all. Saturday, May 29th, her family will receive friends from 9:00 a.m. until the time of her funeral service at 11:00 a.m. at St. Lazarus Serbian Orthodox Cathedral "Ravanica", 4575 East Outer Drive, Detroit. Burial Evergreen Cemetery, Detroit, Michigan. In lieu of flower donations, memorials appreciated to St. Lazarus Serbian Orthodox Cathedral "Ravanica", P.O. Box 99618, Troy, MI 48099 OR St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church, 3109 Scio Church Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48103 OR Mary Nickson Trust (for Kristina)C/O Wm. Sullivan & Son Funeral Home, 8459 Hall Road, Utica, MI 48317. Funeral arrangements entrusted to Wm. Sullivan and Son Funeral Home ~ Utica. Please share a memory with her family at <http://www.SullivanFuneralDirectors.com>

# Cemetery

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## Evergreen Cemetery - Detroit

19807 Woodward Avenue

Detroit, MI, 48203

# Events

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**MAY** **Instate** 09:00AM - 11:00AM

**29**

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St. Lazarus Serbian Orthodox Ravinica

4575 East Outer Drive, Detroit, MI, US, 48234

**MAY** **Funeral Services** 11:00AM

**29**

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St. Lazarus Serbian Orthodox Ravinica

4575 East Outer Drive, Detroit, MI, US, 48234

# Comments

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“ I am so sorry to hear about Mary's passing. I looked forward to seeing her year after year at the the Michigan Private Equity conference. I loved catching up with her and hearing about her daughter. My deepest condolences to her friends and family.

**Jamie Prevo** - September 30, 2021 at 02:01 PM

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“ Mary made memories for the whole neighborhood of Ypsilanti with her monthly Sunday brunches while operating the Breakey Manor on North Huron Street as an event site. She would put together a fixed buffet menu of the highest caliber. Then friends and neighbors would show up till the space was filled with the chatter of busy residents "catching up" with each other while enjoying the most delicious food! We all looked forward to it! She made special memories for my family when my sister and I hosted a party there for our parents 50th wedding anniversary. We invited their friends and arranged for the renowned Ypsilanti Choral Singers to sing them a program of love songs. Everyone talked about it for years afterward - the beautiful venue, great food and singing - all choreographed by our beautiful hostess Mary. Thanks Mary for the wonderful memories! You made it look easy, and I'm sure it wasn't! You are gone way soon. We miss you and will always remember those good times.

Cheryl Farmer  
former Mayor of Ypsilanti

**Cheryl Farmer MD** - June 29, 2021 at 04:45 PM

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“ Mary and I were friends in an unusual place for us both -- Connecticut and later New York where we worked at Yachting Magazine. We were in our early twenties and Mary was never like anyone else. She was a bit of a loner pioneer and had a certain daring. She joined a yacht crew that was sailing up at down the coast --or was it racing in Florida, or both? I'm not sure -- but she did it. She lived in part of a m huge old house in Rye and she found joy in the smallest of things -- such as buying a pink bathroom seat! A strange memory, but important. She told me later, when she was living in Florida and saving up for something big, that one could find almost as much pleasure in buying just a new hair clip or headband -- and she meant it. It seemed that big things came and went, or were always in the background, but small pleasures were always there. We went out a lot together in Greenwich, CT two people who had no idea where life would take us.

We reconnected in Michigan when Kristina was a young girl. Mary's devotion to happiness and simplicity was just the same. She was unfailingly cheerful, full of goals and plans. She sent my little my little rescue dog a session with a real live dog masseuse once -- from Michigan to upstate New York. "We're going to be fifty!" she exclaimed to me with a kind of glee. She stays forever beautiful. Some did not understand the depth of her quiet ambitions. I like to think I did. She was all about building her own world, and one for those she loved. Kristina was her greatest joy and seemed to fill her soul with peace. A great grief that she be taken way too soon.  
PIC TO COME

Louise Wareham Leonard - June 04, 2021 at 07:52 AM

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“ I knew Mary since 2006, when I joined the Institute, until 2016 when I left. We stayed in touch having coffee at the Ross Starbucks and around campus. I was shocked to see her obituary a few days ago. Over the years we discovered we were kindred spirits, bucking the trend while ploughing forward, questioning the status quo and prevailing opinions. First thing in the morning I would lean in her office door for our daily laughs, venting or sharing a new tidbit. Long discussions leading up to and after the adoption of Kristina, the love of her life. Over the years we interacted and helped each other with the MGCS and the PE conferences, truly 'her babies', a tour de force every year. The last time we met, before Covid, we talked about her activities to revamp the look of Kristina's school, her aspirations for 'what's next', my newfound love of cycling, and vowing to pick up after the pandemic. I never knew she was on sick leave, but cherish the wonderful memories of a strong woman, brimming with boundless energy, entrepreneurial originality, and an enduring love for her daughter, laughter and sharing experiences. Till we meet again Mary. May your eternal light shine brightly and guide those you love.

Peter Adriaens

Peter Adriaens - May 31, 2021 at 09:59 AM

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“ I will always cherish the time I had with Mary. We had many adventures together and though we were both busy with our kids and own lives, still kept in touch, but not enough. I will miss her. Condolences to those who loved her.

**Beth A Sherman** - May 30, 2021 at 04:41 PM

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“ Like so many I was stunned to hear of Mary's passing. I worked with Mary at Zell Lurie Institute from when she started in 2000 until I finally retired in the summer of 2014. We were a small team in those early years, working closely together to grow the Institute and establish programs. I have so many memories of working with Mary at symposiums, board meetings and other events. The last time we were together was at the Institute's 20th anniversary. I will cherish being invited back and sharing memories that day. We talked about doing lunch and I'm so sorry that didn't happen. I share in your sadness and know she will be deeply missed. May God bless and strengthen you as you go through the grieving process.

Carolyn Maguire

**Carolyn Maguire** - May 28, 2021 at 05:15 PM

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“ Our Dearest Mary. No words can sum up our decades of close friendship. We will always cherish our time together, with the many memories from being Susan's Maid of Honor in our wedding, to watching Kristina grow up. You were a wonderful friend, mother and inspiration to us all. The many dinners, Operas, Kristina's ballets, and just hanging out at our homes.

You were a very strong, independent, smart woman who always adorned us with your radiant smile, laughter, and ability to pencil me in for lunch with your fully booked daily planner !

Our conversations were deep, the gossip always juicy, and the laughter endless. It was a pleasure watching Kristina grow up and having both of you very close to us in our lives. I don't know why Heaven took their favorite Angel back so early, but, Susan and I can always take comfort with the memories that will stay with us forever.

Love you lots !!!!!

Alex & Susan Koprivica



Alex Koprivica - May 27, 2021 at 05:28 PM

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“ I was stunned to read of Mary's passing in this morning's Free Press. I worked with Mary on many Zell Lurie events during my years as a reporter covering high-tech and startups. She was impeccably organized, thoughtful, and unfailingly helpful, and simply radiated warmth and charm. I can only imagine the family's sense of loss. My deepest condolences to all who loved her and knew her well, and I am glad to learn that faith was an important part of her life. Reading all these messages is truly a tribute to a life well lived.

Matt Roush - May 27, 2021 at 04:55 PM

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“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Mary Nickson.



May 27, 2021 at 01:28 PM

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“ I am so sad to learn of Mary's passing. She was smart, calm and classy. My condolences to the family.

**Gayla Houser** - May 27, 2021 at 10:15 AM

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“ The first time I met Mary was for an interview I had with ZLI and I immediately felt a strong connection with her. I was charmed by her grace, poise, and warmth. She possessed the ability to put those around her at ease and gave them her full attention and respect. I was fortunate to be able to meet her lovely daughter, Kristina, and see first hand the love they held for each other. I will miss her sweet smile, warm hugs, and wonderful sense of humor. My deepest sympathy to her loving family.

**Michele Thomas** - May 27, 2021 at 09:51 AM

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“ Dear Cousins Marie, George, Milan, Chris & Kristina – Primate saucisce. Please accept my sincere sympathies on Mary’s passing. I am very saddened by the news of her passing. I am lighting candles in her memory and my thoughts are with you this week and always. I remember our times at St Lazarus and church hall many festive occasions and times over the years with our families. I also remember back to the time Mary and I both worked at the bank on the Woodward Avenue in the early 80s, and cousin Bato took us for fancy lunch at the London Chop House. What city girls we were. It was a treat when Mary, Kristina and I were able to have a few occasions to meet on my short visits from UK. Our last visit was maybe 7 years ago. Mary and I were able to keep in touch back then via email, then as life gets busy we trail off, though I not only thought of Mary, but many relatives and friends from Detroit, Windsor and the area. As we emerge from izolacija, I anticipate again travel to Belgrade and will say prayers and light candles for Mary and all at our beautiful cathedral of St Sava. I remember dear Mary fondly and we are both smiling. May her memory be the eternal one. Vjecnaja pamjat. Dani Topolski, London England.

**Dani Topolski** - May 26, 2021 at 07:33 PM

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“ Mary was my first friend in Ann Arbor. We had a mutual friend who asked her to call me soon after I moved here. She obliged, of course, and invited me to an outdoor festival at the Greek church in town -- even though it wasn't her REAL church, it was close enough. Her faith was a big part of her social/family life. We quickly bonded as two (not-so-undercover) Spartans working for U-M. We always delighted in a State win over U-M, quietly gloating whenever it happened... She really loved MSU football -- though she tended to call Coach Dantonio "DanANtonio..." I never corrected her. One of my happiest memories with Mary was the 2015 MSU/U-M game at Michigan Stadium. Her boss at the business school gave us his tickets in a swanky faculty section at the Big House. We had padded seats! We met at my office, next to the Michigan Daily early that Saturday, cracked a hard cider, and walked to a tailgate hosted by my student worker and her friends. It was HI-LARIOUS and rather disgusting to be back in a college kid's house (for the other team, no less) on a warm and sunny football Saturday taking jell-o shots. We were so good during the whole game, grabbing each other's hands and secretly cheering whenever MSU did something good. We were sure not to annoy the wealthy GO BLUE donors seated all around us... As the game wound down, with just a few seconds to go, U-M fumbled a punt, MSU grabbed the ball, slid into the end zone, and WON THE GAME. In a burst of spontaneous joy, we jumped out of our seats, screamed, and hugged. It didn't even occur to us we were in enemy territory. The entire crowd was stunned. People gave us dirty looks but we were laughing so hard. We could not believe what we just saw. It was amazing. We stayed till the bitter end, enjoying the marching bands and the alma maters. We walked back to campus and went to my office to watch, and watch, and watch, and WATCH the replay and after-game coverage of DanANtonio on my giant computer screen. That game has always been special for college football fans. Now it takes on a whole new significance for me. I will never forget that day and that surge of completely unexpected and glorious happiness we shared. I'll miss her forever.



Deborah Holdship - May 26, 2021 at 04:52 PM

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“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Mary Nickson.



May 26, 2021 at 02:40 PM

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“ Mary made many friends in Ypsilanti when she had an event space in a lovely historic building. She was such a kind and gracious person and will be missed.

**Barry LaRue** - May 26, 2021 at 01:55 PM

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“ Kuma Mary, we had a friendship that only you and I knew how very special it was. It meant so much to me, knowing how much we cared for one another, knowing that whenever either of us needed to talk we were ALWAYS there for one another 24/7. Our friendship Kuma was a special gift that I'll treasure and carry close to my heart everyday forever. Every morning I'll think of you as I see the beautiful picture you gave me saying "Sisters are for sharing laughter and skipping in puddles". Rest in peace my dear Kuma.

**Dorene Williams** - May 26, 2021 at 11:33 AM

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“ My heart is hurting for the loss of my friend. We met at St. Lazarus when we were both young girls and became good friends right from the start. My memories of Sunday school, kolo dancing, picnics, the basketball team and tournaments will forever be etched in my mind. You will be missed. My sincere condolences to Christina and the Nickson family. Rest In Peace my dear friend.

**Danna Miskov Gray** - May 25, 2021 at 08:53 PM

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“ Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Mary Nickson.



May 25, 2021 at 07:27 PM

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“ Mary was a woman of indomitable spirit. Her energy, effort and humor produced beauty and order all around her. She was a loving mother who gave her daughter roots and wings.

**Marcia W** - May 25, 2021 at 07:18 PM

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“ Mary was a wonderful person, with a warm and beautiful spirit. She was always kind and generous with her time and talents. She will be greatly missed. My heartfelt condolences to Mary's family and especially her beloved daughter Kristina.



**Gretchen Wheeler** - May 25, 2021 at 06:14 PM

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“ Comfort & Light 30" Sonnet was purchased for the family of Mary Nickson.



May 25, 2021 at 05:48 PM

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“ I was very lucky to experience Mary's joyous Holiday spirit. Each year she would treat her teammates, myself included, to a Holiday Extravaganza. She brought her event planning talents to us as she orchestrated multiple games (multiple weeks of fun), a special meal and desserts, and overall cheer. I lovingly referred to her as our very own ZLI Christmas Elf. She truly made the season bright - and will be deeply missed. Much love to her daughter Kristina as well who Mary would always update us on.

**Katy Lind** - May 25, 2021 at 04:23 PM

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“ Mary was a wonderful person. She was always kind and genuine. She would pick up our conversation right where we left off – what we were working on, how to make things better, what was coming up next. One topic we always cherished is our girls. Kristina, you were always on her mind. I will miss our conversations and am so glad to of had the opportunity to be her colleague at the University of Michigan.



**Theresa Ceccarelli** - May 25, 2021 at 03:42 PM

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“ My heartfelt condolences to Mary's family and especially to her biggest love, Kristina. Mary and I would run into one another at work at the Business School and usually discuss what was going on with our children, who are the same age. My thoughts and prayers are with you all at this difficult time.

**Diana Crossley** - May 25, 2021 at 03:40 PM

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“ Mary was a beautiful soul. I admired how she consistently sought ways to be a more involved and conscientious mother to her daughter Kristina. I'm grateful to have had the opportunity to interact with her both at work at the University of Michigan Ross School of Business, as well as in the Loch Alpine community, where she maintained a beautiful home. I send my deepest condolences to Kristina and the family. Lisa Pappas



Lisa Pappas - May 25, 2021 at 03:01 PM



“ Mary was very kind, patient and genuine. I first met Mary as a business reporter covering the goings on of the U-M. After taking a position at the William Davidson Institute at U-M, I was pleased to run into her around Ross and campus. My condolences to her family and to her colleagues. -Scott

Scott Anderson - May 26, 2021 at 02:30 PM



“ I am still in shock from seeing Mary's obituary in the newspaper a few minutes ago . I am stunned and heartbroken . I met Mary years ago when she was selling her catering equipment after closing the business . We became fast friends and a few weeks later we travelled to Paris together .She was an incredible travelling companion , full of life and energy . We visited and enjoyed every sites and ate our way through the city . Mary's organizational skills were admirable and were reflected in not only how beautiful and impeccable her home was , but also how she went about raising Kristina .She was prepared for Kristina s arrival and organized her house for years ahead so that she could devote her time and attention to her new daughter . I will never forget the look of pure joy and happiness in her eyes when I saw her with Kristina . I know how much work and effort it took to take care of a baby , but when Mary committed to something she always gave it 110% and she never faltered . Kristina was a very lucky girl to have had Mary as a Mother however short it was . The values and love from Mary will be valuable assets that she will treasure forever . I am only sad that Mary will not be able to see Kristina grow into the incredible person that she fostered and share in so many future milestones Mary 's passing is a huge loss , not only to Kristina , her family , but also to her friends , the U of M and this Ann Arbor community .She was such a devoted , loyal and talented person .I will miss her so much . My sincere condolences to Kristina and her entire family .

Guerda E Harris - May 27, 2021 at 10:38 AM



“ I'm shocked to have read this through our Greek Church email this morning. I couldn't believe it was the same Mary that I knew and loved. She was an amazing UM partner when I was involved with catering. Her office space was warm, welcoming and her organizational skills were better than perfect. We shared stories about her lovely daughter with endless

pride. She told me all about her glowing throughout her dialogs. I was able to share great stories about my two children that blended so nicely. We talked about the Greek church and my involvement and she shared how much she valued all of our strong beliefs for raising families. She will be missed, Kristina you certainly didn't get to enjoy your mother as long as you deserved, but her memories will forever bring you smiles and joy. Sorry for your loss and may her memories be eternal.

**Laura Kokkales** - May 27, 2021 at 11:52 AM



“ Happy Heavenly Birthday dear Mary. Thinking of you often and sad you are not here with your dear Kristina and family, but glad you are no longer in pain. May you watch over Kristina and your parents from above. Know you are so missed.

Love Kathie Anderson

**Kathie Anderson** - September 19, 2021 at 11:28 AM