



Dolores C. Gaska

September 12, 1930 - July 24, 2013

Gaska, Dolores C. Age 82. July 24, 2013.

Beloved wife of the late Cass. Loving mother of Mitchell Kim, John Michelle and Elizabeth John Willetts. Proud grandmother of Jonathan Meghan, Erin, Matthew, Kayla, Adam and Caroline. Great grandmother of Brayden and Austin. Dear sister of Allen Olds and the late Cyril Olds. Taught in the Lakeshore School System. Member of the National Wildlife Federation and Audubon Society. Enjoyed weaving and genealogy. The family will have a memorial service in Seattle, WA and inurnment will take place privately at Great Lakes National Cemetery. Memorials to the Detroit Zoological Society are appreciated. Arrangements by the Wm. Sullivan & Son Funeral Home, Royal Oak, 248-541-7000. Share your memories at www.sullivanfuneraldirectors.com.

Tribute Wall

KW

“ I just found out about the passing of this special lady in my school-life. Back in the late 50s, Mrs. Gaska taught cooking at Lake Shore Jr. High Miss Freden taught sewing. I hated sewing but loved cooking. When I said something about that to Mrs. Gaska that during my second year 8th grade of Home Ec, she let me take cooking for both semester and made me her sort-of assistant. To this day, I still have the "cookbook" we kept all of our class recipes in still the best Tuna Noodle Casserole, ever!. lollll Btw, she made us bake biscuits "until we got it right" - she finally gave up after the 8th try.

Kathy Wesserling - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

DL

“ Thank you Elizabeth. She was my teacher at Lake Shore High School and I attended there from 1960 thru 1964 and I had it each year.

Dorothy Hisel Little - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

EW

“ Dear Mark, Thank you for extending your memories. My Mom was always impressed by you, your tennis playing and that you drove "such a fancy car!"

Elizabeth Gaska Willetts - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

EW

“ Dear April, I believe my Mom most absolutely knew that her teaching made a difference. Thank you for extending your thoughts.

Elizabeth Gaska Willetts - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

EW

“ Dear Jim, Lake Shore held a very special place in my Mother's life, and she would be honored to know that she made an impression on you. Thank you for sharing.

Elizabeth Gaska Willetts - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

EW

“ Dear Jan, Mom adored you, smarty-pants. And that dog... holy moly, big dog! Generous, yes, she was always looking to give something... how she found time to do it all still impresses me. We have some big shoes to fill Jan, and of course, all that we do should be with the conviction of Mom. It really amazes me as to her talents, and accomplishments. We most certainly were honored to be a part of her very full life. Most definitely, she was the best mother a girl could ever have.

Elizabeth Gaska Willetts - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

EW

“ Dear Margaret, Thank you.

Elizabeth Gaska Willetts - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

EW

“ Thank you for your words.

Elizabeth Gaska Willetts - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

EW

“ Dear Lisa, "Proper" order, yes... Thank you for sharing your thoughts. She would be pleased knowing her teachings made a difference.

Elizabeth Gaska Willetts - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

EW

“ Dear Pat, Thank you for extending blessings. So you were at the school before it became JFK? Very nice to hear from you, and I know my Mom would be proud of knowing that your sewing skills are not only used today, but begin in her classroom.

Elizabeth Gaska Willetts - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

EW

“ Dear Cheri, How very kind of you to express your feelings regarding my Mom. Indelible mark is a wonderful descriptor here! And, the dish washing, yes.... there is most certainly a proper way to do dishes, utensils, and always pay attention to what food is on the item! Good memory, thank you for taking time to share.

Elizabeth Gaska Willetts - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

EW

“ Dear Chris, So glad you are working the list. It should be updated every day! She loved her job, really enjoying the creation of it all. Thank you for sharing your memories and how some of her efforts are holding current today. All the best, Elizabeth

Elizabeth Gaska Willetts - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

EW

“ Dear Dorothy, I believe she knew that there are some basic home economic skills that we all could benefit from, both in necessity and pleasure. It is wonderful to hear the impact to you. Thank you for extending your prayers.

Elizabeth Gaska Willetts - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

EW

“ Dear Annette, Thank you for your sentiments. Sewing, clothing, was her favorite of the Home Arts.

Elizabeth Gaska Willetts - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

EW

“ Dear Pamela, How wonderful to hear the details of your experiences within my Mother's classroom. It is with great pride that I extend a deep and heartfelt "thank you" for attesting to that which we all know: there is a correct way to do everything, and it really makes a huge difference. Although she certainly loved all of the Home Sciences, Clothing was her passion. I know that she would be absolutely thrilled to hear your detail of your clothing endeavors under her tutelage; she would most certainly be smiling wide and just plain tickled to hear how your memories and current days are intertwined with the foundations of her efforts. Your reference to meal preparation, not just the substance food group but the texture and color was spot on. Every single one of us in the family has a "hmmm, color?" story, and it is exactly how you know it to be. My Mom. A glance at the table, an adjustment of the settings, then, the eyebrow.... Whew! It was never a test, but an achievement. We are better in many ways because her standards were high and, frankly, always correct. Thank you for taking time to reflect and share. All the best, Gaska Family

Elizabeth Gaska Willetts - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

PT

“ Mrs. Gaska was my home economics and sewing teacher at Kennedy Junior High in the late 1960s. I would never have believed she came from humble beginnings. She was always impeccably dressed and appeared to live the rules for providing a comfortable home that she taught. I learned many skills from her that I have used through out my life – how to set a table, a systematic approach to cooking, principles of good nutrition, how to iron, and how to sew. I was fortunate to take sewing from her for 3 years. The first year was stitches and techniques, the product a gingham apron. The second year we made a cotton blouse and A-line skirt. The third year was a lined wool suit with matched plaids, bound button holes and covered buttons with the plaid fabric covering the buttons to match the plaid in the suit. The results were stunning, because she had high standards and she believed we could achieve those standards. I remember one day I earned a coveted “A” in ironing. This was a very big deal to me and to many of my classmates. Many junior high school students had great difficulty with ironing. I remember her commenting that some items looked like they had been sat on or stepped on instead of ironed! To this day, Mrs. Gaska’s name has appeared in conversations at many a family gathering. After looking at the food, either a sibling or I would comment that the meals would, or would not, meet Mrs. Gaska’s approval. The approval depended on the food groups AND the variety of color. A plate with all beige-like foods would not pass; a plate with beige and green and red or orange would meet approval! I am grateful to have been able to read of Mrs. Gaska’s life outside of the classroom, as described by her daughter. I am not surprised by, and envy her organizational abilities. I am impressed by her passion for birds and trees as these things provide a pleasant world for us all. Clearly, she was devoted to making life beautiful always.

Pamela Tuoriniemi - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

AD

“ *Dolores C. Gaska*

Annette DeStefano - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

DL

“ *You will be greatly missed. With what you taught me in school in Home Economics, is still with me almost 50 years later and stayed with me enabling me to cook and sew things. I loved her class. Prayers to her family.*

Dorothy Hisel Little - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

CV

“ *Mrs. Gaska was my Home Economics teacher at Kennedy in the early 80's. I remember learning to sew from a pattern in her class and my family still uses one of the recipes she taught us in cooking class. I know she taught Science at one point too, but now I can't remember if I had that class or if it was my brother. I knew she was a dedicated teacher, but had no idea how wonderful a life she lived outside of school. I guess very few of us ever get to know our teachers in their "real lives" or even realize that they in fact do have lives outside of school! Elizabeth, your words and memories of your mother, her accomplishments and the impact she had on her family and her community were beautiful and inspiring. We should all be so lucky to live such a full life and have those we leave behind remember us in such a special way. Sending my deepest sympathies to you and your family...and going to start my list!*

Chris Vasilko - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

JL

“ Elizabeth, After reading your inspiring words, I wish I had Ms Gaska as a teacher. I guess guys didn't take Home Ec. back in the 60's.....but I have become a good cook. Anyway, I certainly do remember her and we were tied together for life as Shorians...her as a teacher and me as a student. She touched alot of people in her life....this world will miss her. Jim Lewis...Lake Shore Class of 1966.

Jim Lewis - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

CN

“ Mrs. Gaska was my home ec teacher at Kennedy Jr High in the late 60's. I learned how to properly do the dishes, miter a corner, match a gingham plaid. She was a tough teacher, but her heart was always in her job....I was just thinking of her the other day...she was one woman that left an indelible mark on my life...my condolences to her family....

Cheri Nelson - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

PB

“ I had Mrs Gaska as a home economics teacher in the 60's at LakeShore Junior High. I learned to sew in her class. I am 60 now so I have used that skill a looong time. I thank her for teaching me a life skill! God Bless your family.

Pat Von Itter Bailey - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

LJ

“ Mrs. Gaska was my home economics teacher at Kennedy Jr High in 1982. She taught me to cook, sew, and the "proper" order to wash dishes. After all these years I always remembered her and her lessons. So sad to hear of her passing.

Lisa Jeffries - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

AC

“ I had your Mom in school, although memory fails what subject it was : What a beautiful tribute! It's so nice to hear about the people you only knew as a teacher : I believe your Mom taught me Home Economics in the early 80's, and if she did, I absolutely loved that class. I hope she knew how valued she was as a teacher and how instrumental she was in shaping our futures.

April Cox - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

TC

“ I am so sorry to read about the loss of Dolores and I would like to extend my condolences to your family. Having to cope with the loss of a loved one can be difficult, but God has promised a time when we can see our loved ones again John 5:28,29. Until that time, please know you can rely on God for comfort 2 Corinthians 1:3,4

T. Cherry - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

MP

“ Dear Gaska family, I am so sorry about your loss!! Prayers for all of her loved ones. Margaret Preston

Margaret Preston - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

JS

“ Mrs. Gaska: You were such a wonderful lady. I am proud to have known you. Even though i wasn't 'technically' family an outlaw -,not an in-law! - you treated me like I was part of your family in every way. I used to love to come home to Royal Oak and stop in and visit you and Mr. Gaska. The best time was when I brought 'Oscar', my great big Irish Wolfhound to visit with you and Mr. G. I remember how you laughed until you cried. It's one of my favorite memories.Thank you for all the kind works, the good advice, and the loving friendship you sol gave to me. I will never forget your kindnesses, or your generosity.God bless you and Mr Gaska. Now you can be together once again.

janet shumaker - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

JS

“ Mark: it is so nice to see that you commented on the passing of Mrs. Gaska. She was a wonderful person, and we will all miss her very much. I am so shocked to see your post as we have all lost contact with you.. The Dondero reunion committee was looking for you for our 35th class reunion! We could not find you. Can you fill me in on where you are and what you are doing? You can email me at jshumaker@sc4.edu. I would love to hear from you.

jan shumaker - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

“September 12, 1930, into a world of great strife and financial troubles, a baby girl was born. Dolores Caroline Olds became the third child of Carl A. Olds and Martha Charlotte Rosengren Olds, Detroit, Michigan. Dolores spent her early days in near poverty, as her mother took in laundry to help the family make ends meet. She did well in school, and enjoyed extracurricular activities, which included the only two sports offered for females: teams of Field hockey and Golf. Dolores lettered in both and continued to enjoy an occasional golf game throughout her adult life. Early in Dolores's life, she enjoyed watching the local baseball team, the Detroit Tigers. As she grew up only blocks away from Briggs stadium, Dolores would find herself attending many games and after the games, Dolores would seek out the various ball players to obtain their autographs. Dolores's favorite ballplayer was Hank Greenberg, or was it Al Kaline? I guess it depended on what year it was. Either way, Dolores thoroughly enjoyed watching the games and was an avid score-keeping aficionado. If Dolores was attending a ball game, no matter where, she would be certain to acquire the blank score sheet and proceed to track the game with pencil in hand. After graduating from Highland Park Junior College in the early 1950's, Dolores continued her studies at Michigan Normal, now Eastern Michigan University, obtaining her Bachelors degree in Home Economics, with a minor in Science. Dolores was hired by the Lake Shore school district immediately upon graduating from Eastern in 1954, and held her position as a Junior High School teacher until her retirement in 1993. Previously, in 1951, Dolores met Cass Gaska during a Chemistry year, chemistry class at Highland Park Junior College. The two married in February 1955. They welcomed their first child, Mitchell Eric, in January 1956, second son, John Cyril in July 1958, and First perfect daughter, Elizabeth Mary in July 1963. Dolores and Cass lived in the same location in Royal Oak, Michigan, from the spring of 1958 until most recently. Dolores enjoyed many opportunities to travel, as she had every summer off, and readily welcomed various adventures. In the early years of the 1970's, Dolores became very interested in genealogy. Her research took her to Utah on regular annual trips, to

review the National Archives for various pieces of familial details. After over 30 years of researching, Dolores had successfully obtained and documented nine generations of her family tree. As Dolores was an accomplished Home Economist, her passions extended to many areas within the life sciences. Foods, Clothing, and Child Care were only the tip of the iceberg of her interests. Anyone who had any experiences with her knew that if there was a kitchen gadget or tool, it could be found in Dolores's kitchen; if there were a sewing machine, or loom to be had, Dolores had it, and most of the time, she would own two. Dolores had a special affection for fine cutlery, flatware, dinner wear and china. Dolores's obsession with proper presentation was evident at any meal as each item would be placed perfectly and with the only purpose of serving to please the individuals seated at the table. Linens were another passion of Dolores's, and blended her love of Foods and Clothing perfectly. There was never a meal in Dolores's home served without the proper fresh linen on display. Dinner is promptly at 6 o'clock. Sharp. There was a time in Dolores's life where the only linens she knew of belonged to affluent individuals for whom Dolores's mother would do laundry. So, as Dolores was able, she would collect the finer trappings of an upper-middle class lifestyle. Being the child of the Depression, it was not acceptable, nor necessary, to be a purchaser of the finer items, at least not in the first sense. Dolores and her husband Cass, had an affinity for frugality that went to the extreme, yet they had a flair for making their fun filled endeavors pay off, with eventual cash but mostly, things they desired to own. They frequently sought out vario

Elizabeth Gaska Willetts - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

MJ

“*Mrs. Gaska was my cub scout leader. Found memories of her and fun family. My heartfelt condolences to her family.* Mark Jablonski

mark jablonski - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM