



Genevieve E. Naughton

March 31, 1924 - July 19, 2018

Hello from Genevieve Edna Gooden Naughton's children - Pat, Ed, and Marge,

We wanted to share with you some details of our mom's life. We are very grateful for the love, kindness, strength, and determination that she expressed to us throughout our lives. Genevieve (also known as Gen) was born to Gustav Edward Gooden and Hildur Elizabeth Larsen Gooden on either March 31 or April 1, 1924 in Chicago, Illinois. The family folklore was that Hildur begged the doctor to date Gen's birth to March 31st as she didn't want her child to be labeled as an April Fool's child, and let me tell you that mom was no one's fool.

Gen's story begins with her father and uncle Leonard who grew up as close friends in Pullman (a town outside of Chicago). As teenagers they volunteered to be ambulance drivers in the French Red Cross. Why didn't they join the U.S. army? Well, America had not entered the war yet because of a strong isolationist policy. Both young men were sympathetic to the European fight against German aggression, concerned about world peace, and enticed by the adventure of foreign travel. Both survived the war and returned home to marry the Larsen sisters (Hildur and Eleanor) after the war.

Genevieve was not a name anywhere in our family tree so naturally the

question came up "why did you name your second daughter Genevieve?" Mom told us that she was named after a French cabaret singer who had impressed her father during WWI. We had many more questions about that matter but the family file on this case is closed!

Gen was an energetic and artistic child who grew up in a loving family. Her father was a banker with Northern Trust and rose through his career to the position of vice president in the bond department. Her mother was a wonderful caregiver - a meticulous housekeeper, an outstanding cook and baker, and an unwavering support to her children. Gen was also close to her two sisters (Myra and Joan). The sisters referred to themselves throughout their lives as the "Gooden Girls."

When she was 3-1/2, Gen traveled with her parents on a vacation to the upper part of Michigan and visited the farm of one of her father's cousins. After they were served raw, unpasteurized milk, Gen contracted paratyphoid fever. She remained sick for months and almost died. During her convalescence, her father gave her a child-sized violin. Gen discovered that she loved playing the violin.

Gen was a very good student and expressed herself through drawing and painting as well as music. After some auditory testing, she learned that she had perfect pitch. Gen used that talent to perform music in many school recitals and plays. As a high school senior, Gen considered several college majors and possible career paths. Initially she wanted to be a medical missionary and travel the world. Then she considered becoming a dress designer or a doctor. Her choice of occupational therapy at Western Michigan University gave her a chance to combine her love of crafts with a desire to help patients. As WWII was raging in Europe and the Pacific, Gen joined the war effort by providing medical support to others.

Her first job out of college was at St. Joseph's Retreat (a Roman Catholic rehabilitation center) in Dearborn, Michigan. This was the first time that she became familiar with Roman Catholic traditions. One of the nurses (Kate) at St. Joseph's Retreat had been dating a young Irish Dearborn man (Tom, Matt's brother) an injured merchant marine who had recovered at St. Joseph's Retreat. Since Kate and Gen were close friends, Kate confided in Gen the story of Tom's brother (Sgt. Matt Naughton) who was home after serving in Skagway, Alaska. Tom and Kate set up a blind date for Gen and Matt and the four of them went sledding together. Gen and Matt soon began dating and found common interests, beliefs, and values. Matt's Roman Catholic faith was an issue for Gen's parents initially. After meeting Matt, though, their concerns eased and Gen and Matt married in Dearborn in 1947 with her parents' blessing.

Upon Matt's return home from the army he was accepted into a Chrysler management training program. His first job was as a Truck Salesman based in Nebraska. As a young wife, Gen continued to play her violin performing with the Omaha Symphony. She also painted scenes of the Nebraska prairie. We still have paintings from this period. Their first three children (Pat, Ed, and Mike) were born in Nebraska. Soon after Matt was promoted and transferred to Detroit, their son Mike was diagnosed with severe disabilities. As they were still grappling with Mike's condition, Gen became pregnant with their fourth child (Margaret, also known as Marge). After Marge's birth, Gen and Matt bought their home in Royal Oak on North Fulton Place.

To assess the scope of Mike's disabilities and develop a plan for his care, Gen and Matt took him to the University of Michigan Hospital. Mike's specific diagnosis was retardation with autism (an uncommon diagnosis in the 1950s). Gen and Matt toured several state institutions and determined that they could not send him to any of them. At this point, a Chrysler colleague of Matt's with

a similarly disabled son told Matt about the Devereux school in Pennsylvania. The school had been developed through the efforts of a Philadelphia teacher (Helena Trafford Devereux) who was committed to improving conditions for developmentally disabled children. The school was wonderful but very expensive.

Gen went back to school and got a teaching license so that she could help pay for Mike's care. She worked for 19 years in the Berkley school system as a second grade teacher and then as a remedial reading specialist. Throughout her time in Royal Oak, Gen created an elaborate backyard garden that neighbors would often visit because of its lush variety of flowers and bushes. Gen and Matt were meticulous home owners busy with many home improvements.

After Gen retired from the Berkley school system, she and Matt built their retirement home in Harrietta, Michigan on 80 acres bordering the Manistee National Forest. Matt worked for another 4 years before they began an active retirement that included travel throughout the US, Canada, and Alaska as well as entertaining family and friends at their home in Harrietta. Many Christmas holidays were spent at their home in the woods with their extended family. Their house was a perfect winter setting surrounded by deep snow and glistening evergreens. During these happy years Gen and Matt taught disabled adults while participating in their church (St. Edward's) and their local food co-op (The Wrinkled Raisin).

Early in 1992 Matt was diagnosed with stomach cancer and died at home in Harrietta. After Matt's passing, Gen split her time between Harrietta and Dallas, Texas where her oldest daughter Pat, lived with her son Dan. Grandma Gen helped raise Dan and remained one of his biggest fans often bragging about his many accomplishments to family, friends, and even strangers. Once Dan graduated from high school, Gen moved back to

Michigan. Sadly a few years after returning to Royal Oak her son Mike died suddenly at his group home in Lake City, Michigan.

Through the past 20 years, Gen lived with her son Ed and enjoyed socializing with her Alpha Delta Kappa(ADK) sisters, participating in Focus News at the Senior Center, discussing books at the monthly meetings of the Clawson Library book club, writing her memoirs, shopping in second hand clothing stores, and playing Rummikub with her friends.

During the years Gen lived with her son Ed, he was a constant support helping her maintain a happy life of purpose. His personal sacrifices over the past years have been greatly appreciated by his sisters Pat and Marge. Gen's life was a long and mostly happy one of service to others. We thank each of you for your friendship and concern for Gen.

In lieu of flowers please consider making a donation to one of the charitable organizations Gen supported: Devereux Foundation, Special Olympics, Michigan Protection and Advocacy Services, or National Public Radio (NPR).

Tribute Wall

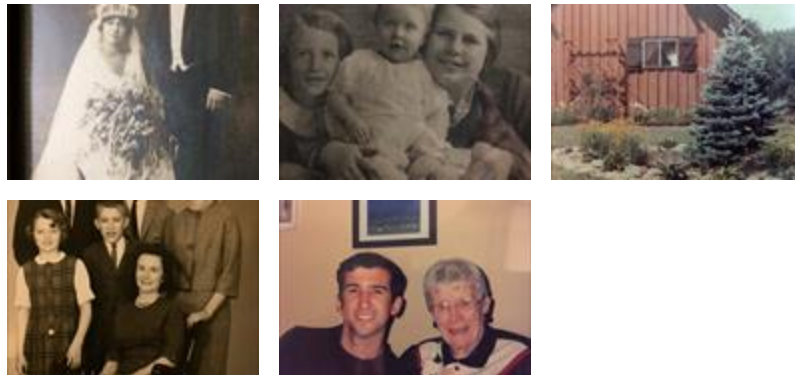
JM

“ When I didn't get my annual Christmas letter from your mother this year, I was afraid that she had passed away. I am just now seeing this. She was a wonderful friend to my mother for many years, and every Christmas after my mother's death, your mother remembered me with a personal letter. I will miss her.

Joan Matthews - December 24, 2018 at 12:11 AM



“ 14 files added to the album Memories Album



Wm. Sullivan & Son Funeral Directors - July 21, 2018 at 11:32 AM