



Helen E. Unruh

June 8, 1928 - July 7, 2023

Helen Elizabeth (Danaher) Unruh, 95, passed away on July 7, 2023. Helen's health had been in decline since she suffered a stroke late last year. Helen was born on June 8th, 1928 in Saint Joseph, Missouri to John and Lucy Danaher. She was the fifth of ten children-Mary, Catherine, Agnes, John, Helen, Leonard, Joseph, James, Thomas, and Margaret-in a close-knit Irish-Catholic family.

Helen attended the Convent of the Sacred Heart Catholic High School in Saint Joseph, Missouri, where she served on the year book staff and loved to play basketball. She graduated from high school in the spring of 1946, and that fall, she attended Mount Saint Scholastica College in Atchison, Kansas.

In 1957, while working at Richards-Gebaur Air Force Base near Kansas City, Missouri, Helen married then U.S. Air Force Captain Max W. Unruh. In 1972, they moved to Michigan, where Helen worked as a secretary for the U.S. Army Tank Automotive Command in Warren.

In 1976, Helen began applying for U.S. Government positions held previously by men-and she found her calling as a quality assurance inspector. Whether she was driving an M-60 tank during a frigid Michigan winter, or traveling to sub-Saharan Africa on short notice, Helen approached every assignment with enthusiasm. The Tank Automotive Command promoted her into management in 1984, and she retired in 1990 as a Supervisory Quality Assurance Specialist.

Helen and Max raised their four children-Eileen, Brian, Roger, and Richard-in

Sterling Heights. Helen taught her children to speak and write in proper English and to be self-sufficient. Helen never shied away from a challenge—whether it be clearing a clogged drain, changing a tire, baking a pumpkin pie from scratch, or completing a difficult assignment at work.

Helen and Max enjoyed attending football games at Ford II High School. They also competed in archery tournaments, and they liked to travel and camp.

Helen loved to fish whenever she could, and she enjoyed sewing throughout her life.

Helen was a long-time member of Saint Lawrence Catholic Church and the Saint Lawrence Seniors group, where she loved playing Mahjong with friends. Helen was generous too. If a friend or family member needed a favor, or place to stay, she did her best to help. Helen's door was always open...

Helen often said that when her "ship came in," she would take her family to Ireland. In 2016, as an 88-year-old, Helen fulfilled that promise by guiding Eileen, Brian, and Richard on a trip-of-a-lifetime to the Emerald Isle. Helen beamed with pride as they explored her Irish heritage. They visited churches and castles, toured the Cliffs of Moher by boat, drove the Ring of Kerry, ate traditional Irish pub food, drank fresh Guinness beer, and walked the same cobblestone streets as Helen's ancestors.

Helen's beloved husband Max died in 2000, after 43 years of marriage. Helen was married to Dale M. Brower of Royal, Iowa from 2003 to 2013. Dale died in 2017. Helen's grandson, Patrick M. Stock, died in 2005. Helen's son, Roger E. Unruh, died in 2010.

Helen is survived by her sisters Agnes Barry and Margaret D'Huyvetter; her children, Eileen Unruh, Brian (Karen) Unruh, and Richard Unruh; grandchildren Molly (Nathan) Conway, Michael (Kelley Hanni) Unruh, David Unruh, Jennifer (Michael) Sheehan, and Kerri Unruh; and great grandchildren Sophia Conway, Ethan Conway, Lilli Unruh, and Jaxin Unruh.

Helen's family would like to thank her loving friends and thoughtful care givers at the Kernway assisted living facility in Bloomfield Hills and the Town Village independent living facility in Sterling Heights. Helen truly enjoyed spending

her last few years with you.

Family and friends will always remember Helen's smile and her gregarious personality. She loved to tell jokes and laugh... Helen was a kind and loving wife, mother, grandmother, sister, and friend. Her generosity, good humor, positive attitude, and adventurous spirit inspired everyone she met. Helen will be sorely missed.

Visitation will be held at the Sullivan & Son Funeral Home, 8459 Hall Road, (3Blks E. of Van Dyke) Utica, Michigan on July 12th from 2pm -8pm, with a prayer service at 6pm. A funeral Mass will take place at St. Lawrence Catholic Church, 44633 Utica Road, Utica, Michigan on Thursday (July 13th). Helen will lie in state at 9:30am until the time of Mass at 10am. Internment will be held St. Lawrence Cemetery. Donations in Helen's honor may be made to a hospice organization of donors choice.

Cemetery Details

St. Lawrence Cemetery

Auburn Road
Utica, MI 48317

Previous Events

Visitation

JUL 12. 2:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Wm Sullivan and Son Funeral Home
8459 Hall Road
Utica, MI 48317
(586) 731-2411
utica@sullivanfh.com
<https://www.sullivanfuneraldirectors.com/>

Prayer Service

JUL 12. 6:00 PM (ET)

Wm Sullivan and Son Funeral Home
8459 Hall Road
Utica, MI 48317
(586) 731-2411
utica@sullivanfh.com
<https://www.sullivanfuneraldirectors.com/>

Funeral Mass

JUL 13. 10:00 AM (ET)

St. Lawrence Catholic Church
44633 Utica Road
Utica, MI 48317

Tribute Wall

SA

“ sorry about helen's passing. Nathan Conway YOU are the LOVE OF MY LIFE! I love fat and dumpy and balding men. Call me, Sara

sara - December 15, 2023 at 01:58 AM



“ Pretty Please was purchased for the family of Helen E. Unruh.



July 12, 2023 at 01:32 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Helen E. Unruh.



July 11, 2023 at 06:59 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Helen E. Unruh.

July 11, 2023 at 02:46 PM



“ *Gracious Lavender Basket was purchased for the family of Helen E. Unruh.*



July 11, 2023 at 02:46 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Helen E. Unruh.*



July 11, 2023 at 11:00 AM



“ *Joe and Deb Schmondiuk purchased the Fairest of All for the family of Helen E. Unruh.*



Joe and Deb Schmondiuk - July 10, 2023 at 03:39 PM



“ *Rose Remembrance was purchased for the family of Helen E. Unruh.*



July 10, 2023 at 01:13 PM



“ *Beautiful Dreams was purchased for the family of Helen E. Unruh.*



July 10, 2023 at 08:44 AM



“ *Helen had many friends throughout her life and I was privileged to be one of her last ones. We became instant friends from the time I moved into Town Village. We shared many meals, mah jongg games, and outings. I treasure her friendship and will miss her greatly.*

Fran Tipton

Fran Tipton - July 09, 2023 at 02:41 PM



“ *Fairest of All was purchased for the family of Helen E. Unruh.*



July 09, 2023 at 02:30 PM