



Kathy Davidson

November 15, 1948 - July 5, 2015

Kathryn Sue Davidson (née Sanwald) was born in Jackson, Michigan on November 15, 1948 to Robert Sanwald and Geneve Sanwald (née Crane). She grew up in Grand Rapids and graduated from Ottawa Hills High School and Central Michigan University.

She loved attending and being a counselor at the YWCA Camp Newaygo in Newaygo, Michigan. At camp she broadened her horizons, made lifelong friends and, as a natural and gifted teacher, was a guide and counselor to many younger campers. Years later, after hearing about her many “antics” from camp, she brought Abby to camp through “Mom and Me” and Chris through “Dad and Me.”

After college she married Rob Davidson, the love of her life. She and Rob were totally devoted to their two children. Kathy’s mission as a mom was to first give them roots, and then wings, and she did so beautifully. Her family is carrying on this legacy through her first grandchild, Maya Maffei.

For twenty years, she worked for ComputerTots teaching early childhood education games on the computer to pre-schoolers. She loved working with children and told warm, humorous stories about her students.

Kathy loved Lake Michigan and the Leelanau Peninsula, where she and Rob,

together with her parents, built a cottage in 1978. Some of the greatest family memories were of jumping waves, roasting s'mores around the campfire and climbing Sleeping Bear Sand Dunes.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations to Camp Newaygo: www.campnewaygo.org.

Memorial visitation Thursday 4-7:30 p.m. and service Friday 10:30 a.m. at the Wm. Sullivan and Son Funeral Home, 705 W. 11 Mile Rd. (4 blks. E. of Woodward), Royal Oak.

Previous Events

Memorial Visitation

JUL **9.** 4:00 PM - 7:30 PM (ET)

Wm. Sullivan and Son Funeral Directors-Royal Oak
705 W. Eleven Mile Road
Royal Oak, MI 48067
(248) 541-7000
royal@sullivanfh.com
<https://www.sullivanfuneraldirectors.com/>

Memorial Service

JUL **10.** 10:30 AM (ET)

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705 W. Eleven Mile Road
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Tribute Wall

TA

“ *Mr. Davidson, Since we don't have your home address, the Ottolini family would like to extend their sincere sympathy on the passing of your wife and mother of your children. The passing of a loved one is always a painful experience, one the family must live with day by day. You will always keep your love and fond memories in your heart and home.*

For those of you who don't know, Rob was the best English teacher and counselor at Carter Middle School and Cousino High School. He left a tremendous legacy and hard to fill shoes when he retired a few years back. He was always available to listen and help students and fellow teachers for college advice and personal problems. I was a student in his first English class at Carter Middle School and had him as a teacher for two years in a row. He taught my siblings and was a counselor for my children both at Carter and Cousino High school decades later. Upon reading the tributes for Kathy, I see he found his soul mate equal in empathy towards others and teaching excellence. Our family wishes you a blessed peace and embrace the assurance that Kathy will always be with you in your hearts and soul. God Bless You. Terese Ackerman (Sue Ottolini Matthew, Jennifer Finna Rimmke, Sarah Ackerman)

Terese Ackerman - July 12, 2015 at 08:46 AM

LC

“ *I am so sorry to hear of Kathy passing. It was great to have a chance to see Kathy, Rob, and Kim in March after so many years. I have fond memories of Kathy and I playing softball as well as other sports when we were growing up as cousins. Kathy was a beautiful and funny person. She will be missed. My thoughts and prayers are with you at this time. Cousin Leigh*

Leigh Clemmer - July 10, 2015 at 08:25 AM

MD

“ *I am so very sorry for your loss. May the God of all comfort embrace you with peace and hope now and in the days to come. Rev 21:4*

Ms Dukes - July 09, 2015 at 06:07 PM

LF

“ *Love your Mentors of Michigan Work family purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Kathy Davidson.*



Love your Mentors of Michigan Work family - July 09, 2015 at 03:49 PM

WA

“ *To the family of Kathy Davidson : Please accept my sincere sympathy for the loss of your loved one. While we don't know one another, experiencing the devastation of losing a loved one is something we all face in our lives. The Bible promises a time when "death will be no more" (Rev 21:3.4) and assures us that God hears our prayers (Ps 55:22). I hope this brings you some peace during this difficult time.*

Wanda - July 09, 2015 at 08:20 AM

“ Kathy was the oldest daughter of my sister, Gen, and her husband, Sandy, and was born two months after my wedding to Dick Clemmer in the fall of 1948. We were far apart in miles most of our lives, but were in close touch. We spent many family vacations in Michigan. I remember many happy times of swimming and picnics at Clark Lake in Jackson with Kathy and sister, Kim, together with our kids. In the summer of 1961, when Kathy and family paid us a visit in our new home in Edina, MN, Kathy pushed our 3 mo.-old baby, Lynne, in her baby carriage in the July 4th parade.

We were happily present with some of our children at Kathy and Rob's wedding. We rejoiced with them at the birth of Abby and then of Chris--Kathy and Rob were so happy with each one and became great parents. We hosted Abby here for a couple of ice skating events and rejoiced with her proud parents as she won the regional competition for the Nationals at 15 years of age. Chris was here for that, too. We watched his baseball games with the MN Gophers when he came to Minneapolis when he was at Northwestern.

After Kathy and Rob became co-owners of the cottage on Lake Michigan at Glen Arbor, we saw them there a number of times, including the time we were all there for the happy occasion of Kim's wedding to Glen Ford.

Dick and I came to Michigan to visit every year, until about four or five years ago, and we always stayed with Kathy and Rob. Kathy fed us well, and we had many happy times together.

Just four months ago, Kathy and Rob drove here from Detroit to be present at the Memorial Service for my husband, Dick. I really appreciated their coming, and the day after the service they, along with Kim, came over for a pancake breakfast with my daughter, Lynne, and me.

Afterward, we had a nice relaxing time on our patio before they had to leave to go back.

I am so glad that I have all these great memories of such a special and loved member of our family.

Pat Clemmer

Pat Clemmer - July 08, 2015 at 03:47 PM



“ *Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet was purchased for the family of Kathy Davidson.*



July 08, 2015 at 03:26 PM

“ Recollections of a little sister - Part 2

I was in college when Abby was born. When Kathy and Rob brought Abby home from the hospital, my parents and I met them at their home in Huntington Woods. While her parents caught up on some sleep, I rocked Abby for 5 ½ hours straight – thrilled to be holding this “bundle of joy” that had joined our family! I loved sewing little sun-suits, hats, and dresses for her. As a little girl, Abby was always twirling and spinning! She rarely sat still. So figure skating was a natural activity for her. We loved seeing her progress and even compete at the national level. We are so proud of her, and all she has accomplished in her career, marriage to Dan, and mothering Maya. I'm so grateful Kathy enjoyed one full year being “Nana” to sweet Maya. I'm sure it was a highlight of her life!

I remember Chris as a very gentle, quiet, positively a-DOR-able blond-haired toddler. Just as precious and cuddly as he could be! Kathy was always so tender with him. He brought out some of the best mothering qualities in her. Chris loved to play baseball, eventually becoming a great pitcher in college. We enjoyed following his progress, and are so proud of the fine man he is today. Thoughtful, caring, considerate of others. A big help to Kathy and I when our dear dad passed on just four years ago. (Our Mom had passed on in 1996.) We are thrilled for Chris to be marrying Becky next month, as they settle in to their new home – located just down the street from Kathy and Rob's house! Becky and her wonderful big family, have added a whole new element to ours, and I'm glad Kathy got to enjoy that over the last couple of years.

Last Saturday evening, just hours before she left us, I got to speak with Kathy by phone. I was so grateful to hear her voice! I reminded her of a few of our happy memories together, and times when she was a great comfort and strength to me – expressing my deep love for her and gratitude for all she shared with me as my big sister. She was able to respond verbally three times. What a gift to me! I think the last thing she said to me was, “Yes, I remember.” Yes,

Kathy, I will always remember our happy times together, too. In the years to come, when I sit on the deck at our beloved family cottage gazing out on Lake Michigan, or walk the beautiful beach there, I will think of you. You will live on in my heart forever, as my one and only, very precious, big sister. I love you so much!

*Kimberly Sanwald Ford
Elsah, IL*

Kim Ford - July 08, 2015 at 02:54 PM

“ *Recollections of a little sister - Part I*

Thank you, all, for sharing your memories of Kathy. They mean so much to our family. I'd like to share some of mine. My entry is in two parts due to the space allotments of each entry.

Kathy was already ten years old when I came on the scene. My parents made an audio recording when telling Kathy that her long-cherished wish for a baby sister or brother was being fulfilled. She was going to be a big sister! It is fun to hear her voice as a nine year old. The whoops of joy, and squeals of glee clearly reveal her delight at hearing the news.

I remember how we used to lay cross-wise on Kathy's bed and look out her bedroom window. As we watched the neighborhood activity below, she would play music on her transistor radio. After all, the Beatles had just arrived on the world stage! Kathy enjoyed music and had lots of albums.

She really liked peanut butter on toast for breakfast. We made it together often before she (and later we) left for school in the mornings.

As a kid, I was very ticklish. Kathy relished in tackling me and tickling me mercilessly!

One day she didn't want to get out of bed to go to Sunday School. My dad told me to go get Kathy up. So I poured a glass of water on her in bed! She was out of that bed in a flash - chasing me through the house. I don't remember my fate that day....

Kathy loved to tease me. I vividly recall her dangling me over the toilet, flushing it, and telling me I was going down the drain, as I screamed in terror! (Oh, the antics of kids!)

When Kathy was 16 we took our first family vacation. It was to

Washington, DC. We took many tours of the government buildings and enjoyed seeing the cherry blossoms. But we got caught in a major traffic jam – like a parking lot - for hours. I can still picture it! (My highlight of the whole trip, as a six year old, was picking dandelions on the front lawn of the White House!) We all liked to down-hill ski, and were so happy when Kathy got to go on a ski trip to Breckenridge in Colorado! We also took a family trip to Daytona Beach, Florida when Kathy was 22.

At school, I was embarrassed that I didn't know how to dance. So I went home and asked my big sister to teach me! I vividly remember her showing me some basic steps as we pranced around her bedroom.

Kathy loved Camp Newaygo and went every summer. When I was big enough to go, I thought it was fun. But when I saw my sister around camp, I would miss my mom and dad and feel homesick. So I only lasted a couple years. She on the other hand, thrived there – making life-long friends over many years. I recognize some of your names in the comments you've written on this website. Thank you for remaining such faithful friends with Kathy!

I always thought it was interesting that her camp friends nick-named her “Harv”, as that was our paternal grandfather's first name!

I distinctly remember my parents and I anxiously huddled around the TV, as our local TV station covered a terrible fire, when the lodge at Camp Newaygo burned to the ground. So sad.

When Kathy was in college at Central Michigan University, she invited me to come visit for an event called “Little Sister's Weekend”. I was thrilled to go and be with her there!

Kathy's first job out of college was working for the Girl Scouts of America. Our Mom was a Girl Scout leader, and I had been a Brownie and Girl Scout, too. So we thought that was a great job for

Kathy.

Rob and Kathy were married when I was 15. I was privileged to be maid of honor in their beautiful wedding Dec. 21, 1973. My parents and I thoroughly loved Rob – right from the beginning! How could we not?! You all know how wonderful he is in every way!! I'm so grateful he and Kathy shared over 41 years of a very happy, strong marriage together – an inspiration to all of us.

Continued - see Recollections of a little sister - Part 2

*Kimberly Sanwald Ford
Elsah, IL*

Kim Ford - July 08, 2015 at 02:45 PM



“ *Spring Has Sprung Mixed Basket was purchased for the family of Kathy Davidson.*



July 08, 2015 at 01:06 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Kathy Davidson.*



July 08, 2015 at 11:00 AM

LW

“ This was a very special time-Kathy and Rob's visit to Minneapolis in March. It meant so very much to have Kathy, Rob and Kim at my dad's service. We had a few very treasured days together. Much love to Kathy's family at this time.



Lynne Willeke - July 08, 2015 at 08:48 AM



“ Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Kathy Davidson.



July 07, 2015 at 10:03 PM

AT

“ My sincere condolences to the Family. Sorry that I didn't know you Kathy and that you had to leave so soon but I am privileged to know the wonderful daughter you raised and be in awe of your beautiful granddaughter.

Ann Marie Taliercio - July 07, 2015 at 07:24 PM

DR

“ *Kathy was the essence of beauty, style and grace. I had the pleasure of reuniting with her (after attending pre-school with her son Chris) years ago designing Rob & Kathy's house. She had exceptional taste and took so much pride making their home beautiful. We bonded over design and so much more. We shared some of the most memorable and important milestones together in my life and hers. The birth of her adored granddaughter Maya and Chris' exciting wedding engagement. Nothing made her happier than the happiness of her children.*

She was a mentor, teacher, confident & constant learner. Truly a person people gravitated towards. Clever with a great sense of humor and witty, always.

My mom and I had lunch with Kathy two weeks ago. She was beautiful, funny and her full self.

In the words of the beautiful angel she gave to my son "May angels watch over you." To a beautiful woman and her loving family - you will never be forgotten - love, Dayna Rasschaert

Dayna Rasschaert - July 07, 2015 at 02:42 PM

BE

“ *Kathy was one of my best and most helpful friends when the kids were little. Abby and Annie were in the same class, and being a single parent, Kathy often, unselfishly helped me out by taking Annie over to play with Abby. I love that woman. Lori Bell*

Bell - July 07, 2015 at 12:12 PM



“ *Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Kathy Davidson.*



July 06, 2015 at 11:20 PM

SS

“ Rob, Abby, and Chris - Rick and I remember all the good times we shared with you and Kathy. I loved the crazy mischief we enjoyed as sorority sisters at Central and our couples group dinner parties and summers at Tawas with the kids. Kathy always had a smile on her face and a laugh to share. She will remain in our hearts forever.
Fondly, Rick and Steff Starnes

Steff and Rick Starnes - July 06, 2015 at 09:59 PM

NN

“ I have so many memories of Kathy from High School at Ottawa hills, Camp Newaygo and working at the YW CA . We nicknamed her Harv when we were last year campers. We planted a tree in our final campfire at camp and it is still growing near the waterfront of camp. We had a wonderful time with Harv at our last reunion.i am so sorry for your family for such a loss. I love you my Newaygo sister forever. Nancy Riekse Norden OHhS 67 And Camp Newaygo forever.

nancy Riekse Norden - July 06, 2015 at 09:20 PM

LG

“ I remember Harvey. She was my counselor at Camp Newaygo in the 1960s. It was a carefree and wonderful time for all of us. May her memory be a blessing.

Luann Shuer Garber

Luann Garber - July 06, 2015 at 08:55 PM

BC

“ I met Kathy (Harvey) back in the summer of 1967. I arrived at Camp Newaygo as a first year counselor. Kathy had been at Camp Newaygo for several years. She welcomed me to camp and through the years I would reconnect with her at camp reunions. She was my Newaygo Sister.and we shared a bond formed at camp. Rest in peace "Harvey". LYNSF---Love Your Newaygo Sister Forever

"Chili"--Barbara Chiles

Barbara Chiles - July 06, 2015 at 07:10 PM

SB

“ My thoughts and prayers go out to my Newaygo Sister "Harvey". I am glad she was able to share a short time of her life with me at Camp Newaygo in the 1960's. Her smile, her laughter and her ability to care for kids was a blessing. We have a song from the era that say "across the lake a campfire burns.....I love you my Newaygo sister may God grant that me meet again..Your friendship has made me grow stronger, your kindness to other has been, a sweet inspiration of caring....."

Thanks Harv

Sue Barthold "Bart"

Sue Barthold - July 06, 2015 at 06:45 PM



“ Sweet Tenderness was purchased for the family of Kathy Davidson.



July 06, 2015 at 05:00 PM