



Nada Grubor

September 6, 1942 - December 8, 2025

Nada Roselle Grubor Obituary

Nada Roselle Grubor, 83, of Birmingham, Michigan, passed away on December 8, 2025.

Nada was born in Highland Park, to two hard working immigrants from the former Yugoslavia. Her father Arthur Mark Sertich was a notable Croatian-American artist and her mother Roselle Irek Sertich a Secretary of the Croatia Fraternal Union Zora Lodge and committed to volunteer work her whole life. She was a sister to Mark Gregory Sertich.

Nada was also the devoted mother of Aleksandra (Sasha) Roselene Grubor and Milena Sertich-Grubor Thomas and her love for her daughters was one of the central forces of her life. She was the loving grandmother to Cordelia Roselle Thomas, Milan Howard Thomas, Howard Paul Thomas, Alessandro Mile Parilli and Luca Maximus Parilli. She is also survived by Michael Howard Thomas, who was a devoted presence in her life. She was preceded in death by her long-time husband Mile Grubor. She was a significant support to her nieces and nephews Anne Sertich, Stefanie Sertich, and Mark Sertich, Jr., Vladimir Bucalo, and Milan Bucalo who were greatly impacted by her love and dedication as an Auntie and Teta.

Nada was dedicated to passing on the Croatian culture to her daughters and

grandchildren. A gifted musician and pianist, Nada carried a deep and abiding love for Croatian culture, music, history, and language that was lovingly instilled in her by her parents and remained a guiding thread throughout her life.

Her love of Europe didn't end with her roots. After attending Shine of the Little Flower Grade School, University of Detroit High School, and Wayne State for college, she went abroad to further her studies in France where she immersed herself in Parisian culture and language. Even to always wearing a cherished Parisian necklace into her 80s.

Nada was an award-winning English language arts teacher, beloved by her students at Detroit Country Day School. Not only did Nada teach English but she periodically also taught an etiquette and manners class. Her daughters will always remember being reminded at the dinner table "What if you were having tea with the Queen?"

Nada was a self-professed seeker and "truth-teller" by nature. She spent countless hours in bookstores, attending lectures and seminars, and engaging in long, thoughtful conversations with friends (and with strangers who rarely remained strangers for long). She was endlessly curious about people, ideas, and what it truly meant to understand one another.

Hospitality came naturally to her. Her home, her table, and her attention were always open. If you called Nada - day or night - you would be met with a listening ear and thoughtful advice.

She was witty, candid, and unafraid to speak her mind. She could be disarmingly direct, but never dull. Her generosity was expansive and sincere, given freely and often instinctively. Guided by a deep sense of care for others, more than one person (students and friends) has described Nada as someone

who 'changed their life'.

Nada filled rooms with her beautiful presence, her humor, her intelligence, her warmth. She leaves behind a legacy of connection, conversation, music, and love that will continue to live on in all who knew her.

Our hearts are heavy and she will be deeply missed.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests any memorial donations be made to the Groves High School Performing Arts program as Nada was a lifelong lover and supporter of the arts in which her children, nieces and grandchildren participated.

<https://grovesperformingartscompany.ludus.com/donate.php>

Tribute Wall



“ *Memories of Nada Sertich Grubor*

Nada was the older, sophisticated cousin I wanted to be like, in my youth. She was smart, a talented musician, beautiful and always stylish. Nada was eight years my senior. That was a chasm when she was in high school and I was in grade school. When we were invited to travel to Europe Aunt Roselle (her mom) and Nada, I was thrilled. Twenty-one at the time, I'd recently moved to San Francisco. But I was determined to save money in order to return to Detroit, then travel to Europe with my sister, Nada, and Aunt Roselle.

Aunty headed directly to Croatia. Nada, Karen (my sister) and I spent a month exploring Europe together, then headed to Yugoslavia. Nada had studied French in Paris a few years before. So, she'd traveled in Europe before, and we were the neophytes. Together we three travelled through London, Paris, Rome, Florence, Zagreb, Dubrovnik, and a few more cities. What a special time it was! I was delighted to be traveling with my worldly cousin. It was quality time when we could get to know our cousin Nada, as adults. She would have been 29 at that time. But she liked to tell people we met along the way that she was 25, when she traveled with us, lol!

While in Paris it was a delight listening to Nada speak French fluently. She was so comfortable in Paris. And she was so animated when conversing with Parisians! She fit in well there... When we eventually reached Croatia, she was our interpreter there, as well. I could only find one old picture of Nada from that trip. She was sitting in a break in the fortress wall that surrounds Dubrovnik. What a gorgeous Croatian town! That was before the Homeland War, when parts of Dubrovnik were later bombed. We just returned to Croatia and Dubrovnik this last summer. Walking around Dubrovnik brought back a flood of sweet memories from that special trip Karen and I shared with Nada and Aunt Roselle.

After moving from Detroit to San Francisco to attend college, I didn't

see Nada very much. We both had busy lives... During a recent trip back to Detroit, in late 2024, I made a point of visiting her, wanting to reconnect in person. She was still charming and intellectual, talking about the authors she enjoyed reading. I am ever so grateful that I was able to spend some time with Nada on that recent trip to Michigan. She and Aunt Roselle were major influences in my life. They both set wonderful examples of how to appreciate being American while still maintaining and nurturing our Croatian cultural heritage. They were both also role models as strong, intelligent Croatian American woman!

Ann Kuffner



Ann Kuffner - December 28, 2025 at 06:43 PM

CC

“ *Nada talked constantly about her daughters. It was evident to everyone around her how much she loved being a mother. She often told the story of how she stayed awake for 3 days straight after giving birth, in wonder of the new life she created.* ”

Crystal Cannon - December 24, 2025 at 09:33 PM

RF

*My grandmother, Madeline Sertich Karakas Mesich was your grandfather's Arthur Sertich sister.
I would have liked to have know her,
My mother, Katherine Karakas Giuliani & my father, Robert Giuliani visited your grandparents .
Please if you ever come back to Oregon visit us.
Please accept my condolences.
Roberta Giuliani Fox*

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Roberta Fox - December 28, 2025 at 10:44 AM

MN

Nada moved through life with charm, music, curiosity, and restless spark. Endlessly interested in the world, always becoming. She listened deeply - to words, to silence, to hearts, lived vividly, and left a quiet echo that will never fade. Rest in peace dear Nada, embraced by angelic music.

My heartfelt condolences to her beautiful and amazing daughters and the entire family.

*Your friend,
Marina C Neves*

Marina C Neves - January 08 at 12:01 PM