



Kathleen Puleo

July 17, 1959 - September 15, 2023

PULEO - Kathleen (nee Nowicki)

September 15, 2023, Age 64, of Lancaster, NY, passed peacefully surrounded by her loving family. Beloved wife of 42 years to Raymond Puleo; loving mother of David (Danielle), Nicole (Mark) Bishop and Andrew (Renee); cherished grandmother of Logan, Ella, Clara, Sophia, and Phineas; Dear daughter of George J. and the late Cecelia (nee Zieminski) Nowicki; dearest sister of Christine (Michael) Pigeon, James, Michael (Joann), Patricia (Marshall) Nowak, and; also survived by many nieces and nephews.

Kathy's wish is for her loving family and friends to gather for a Celebration of Life party that will be held at the Sto Lat Bar/Chrusciki Bakery (4475 Transit Rd Ste 106) on Monday, October 2nd from 3 to 8 PM. Many of Kathy's favorite desserts will be served in addition to food, drinks and more DESSERTS! Family and friends are invited to honor Kathy's life and selfless love by donating to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital (www.stjude.org/donate). No prior visitation. Arrangements by the DANIEL R. SMOLAREK FUNERAL HOME. Please leave condolences online at www.SmolarekCares.com

Kathy was a loving wife, dedicated mom, caring grandma, and brilliant home cook. She was a strong-willed, independent, organized, detail oriented, but humble person. She was always striving to be her best, whether it was cooking, interior design, crafting or teaching. She inspired everyone around

her to be their best. She always knew what, when and how to say everything. The world is truly not as bright without her beautiful, loving presence.

As a young girl, she was recognized for being the first paper girl in the region. As a teenager, her dad taught her how to drive stick shift for her first car, a '76 white with red interior Ford Mustang. She mastered stick shift which she drove through the famously steep inclines in San Francisco.

She met her husband, Ray, at Manufacturers Hanover Data Center. She worked as an HR Representative, and he worked as a Computer Operations Shift Supervisor. When Ray accepted a job in San Francisco, they drove together across the country, which ignited their love for travel. She returned home, shortly thereafter she accepted his proposal and moved out to San Francisco to be with him. They enjoyed San Francisco and the beautiful weather. On weekends they would go to the wharf to enjoy the fresh seafood, cuisine, scenic views and unique atmosphere. They would also drive along the coast, taking trips to LA or towns in between to enjoy the local produce and picturesque scenery. Even still, as they began preparing for marriage, they discussed having children and Kathy knew she wanted to be back in Buffalo to have the support of her loving family.

Back in Buffalo, Kathy and Ray had 3 children. Kathy and her siblings raised their kids together. They spent their free time together swimming, playing cards and enjoying each other's company. Kathy's children grew up with their cousins, who were like siblings, due to how close Kathy was with her sisters and brothers. Many of the cousins remain close friends to this day. Kathy, Ray and her family cherish the years and years of lifelong memories with her siblings and their families.

Kathy loved working with children striving to instill her enthusiasm for learning into them. She succeeded when she spent her children's pre-school and

school years as a stay-at-home mom, kindling their excitement to pursue a lifetime of learning. During this time, she volunteered as a class parent, field trip chaperone, and participated in the PTO; where she met her dear friend, the late Debbie Braun. Her and Debbie's friendship grew throughout the years, as they bonded over their life of caring for their families. They were able to share their struggles and small triumphs while dealing with challenges they had later in life.

After her children were older, she became a beloved teacher's aide for preschool and elementary-aged children. As a teacher's aide, and at home, she was a sanctuary for kids, who always felt safe, calm, cared for, and respected. That same atmosphere she embodied made her house feel like home for everyone. Her home was always the ultimate gathering place for friends and family. Bills and Sabres games, birthday parties, holiday parties, Friday nights, Sunday afternoons, her place was the place to be. Her passion for cooking meant she was the one behind the delicious meals and the succulent desserts.

When she wasn't creating an oasis at home, she could be found helping others. She was involved in Meals on Wheels throughout most of her adult life, even during her years battling cancer. At Meals on Wheels, she helped with meal delivery, gift wrapping, fundraising, and delivering Thanksgiving dinners. She also took classes to become a photographer to help others capture special moments. She was later able to work for JCPenney Professional Photography Studio when they were a prominent studio for portrait sessions. Her public connections didn't end there. She was a cashier at Target for 15 years and loved interacting with her customers and fellow employees until she retired.

Along with her other skills and accomplishments, she was creative, artistic,

and loved sharing her crafts with others. She created ceramic figures, minutely detailed chess sets, paintings, and much more. She created a Santa face that was always hung in the hall and became a staple in her home during Christmas. Her children and grandchildren carry on her love of crafting.

For the past 16 years, her grandchildren were a main source of her joy. Her first grandchild nicknamed her living room, “The Coffee Room”, due to her fond affection for coffee. Every morning she could be found in her coffee corner watching her morning news show. Everyone knew her afternoon Starbucks order, Venti Nonfat Caramel Macchiato.

Kathy was an avid traveler to warm climates with her loving husband. Their love for traveling together flourished when they flew to Hawaii for their honeymoon. They continued to travel even more with their children and their families. Her kids’ first plane ride was out to Colorado to visit her brother Jim’s family. More trips were to come to her favorite locations in the Caribbean via cruises or the Islands, Hawaii and also all over the country. During her travels she enjoyed taking excursions to learn about local culture, historical events, etc. She especially enjoyed the Caribbean, including the horticulture, people and extraordinary beach sunsets. She just loved being outside barefoot, especially on beautiful beaches, but also found the courage to explore more adventurous excursions, such as zip-lining (though petrified before taking that first step off), parasailing, kayaking, hiking, etc. Her courage and sense of adventure inspired her family to become as adventurous as her, like taking her kids on amusement park rides, especially roller coasters. As recently as last summer’s vacation with her daughter’s family, just weeks before her cancer recurrence, she coaxed her reluctant grandchildren to face their fears and join her on a roller coaster. They fell in love with the ride and excitedly went on many larger and faster roller coasters with her throughout their trip.

We have all been so lucky to have known such a beautiful soul, she will be

greatly missed.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

OCT 2. 3:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Sto Lat Bar/Chrusciki Bakery
4475 Transit Rd
Suite 106
Williamsville, NY

Tribute Wall

RB

“ *Wish I wasn't entering this wish we were out Bowling or at Canada's Wonderland with all the kids. I met Ray in our early 20's at work. We went out to lunch and he seen this beautiful girl that was working there. That evening we didn't do a whole lot of work as Ray was trying to figure how do I ask that beautiful lady for a date. Well he made a call back to the restaurant talked to her and got the nerve to ask her. And surprisingly ha ha she said yes. Well she soon became his wife and they were inseparable. They did everything together raised three lovely children and were amazing parents. We will all miss Kathy and continue to keep her in our memories and prayers. But believe me there's a new beautiful angel up there looking down on us. We will miss you but never forget you. ❤️*

Russ and Renee Bellagamba - October 01, 2023 at 09:35 PM

BB

“ *Always spent time together with Debbie. You two will up again in heaven.*

Bob Braun - October 01, 2023 at 01:00 PM

BF

“ *I heard much about Kathy from my sister Debbie. Both women accomplished so much in their well-lived lives, fought their battles so hard, but gone way too soon. The world is less bright with Kathy's passing. My condolences to the entire family. The essence of her life lives on in all she touched and loved.
With sympathy, Bill Ferguson*

Bill Ferguson - October 01, 2023 at 11:13 AM

LR

“ We would like to extend our sympathies to the family. Kathy’s kindness and love will be remembered. I have great memories from sitting on the side lines of soccer games and from our Wednesday night volleyball games.

Guy and Linnette Ramey

Linnette Ramey - September 29, 2023 at 10:13 PM

JD

“ Our thoughts and prayers are with your family at this difficult time.
With love John and Pat Diebel

John and Pat Diebel - September 27, 2023 at 06:52 PM

DH

“ We just wanted to let you know that our thoughts are with you and your family. Regards, Debbie & Tom

Deborah Holt - September 23, 2023 at 07:03 PM