

CATHERINE "KAY" DIDYCZ

Catherine Didycz, age 90, passed away on November 24, 2023. She was born as Catherine Salapow in 1933 on the Southside of Pittsburgh. Both of her parents were immigrants from Eastern Europe. Her father, Averian, worked in a steel mill and her mother, Mary, cleaned offices. She grew up with her siblings Helen, Nina, John, Bill, Mike, Rose, and Jean. Nicknamed "Kutchy", she was the class valedictorian and was named "Best Dispositioned Girl" in the South High class of 1951. That pleasant disposition was true all of her life.

She married her high school sweetheart, William (Bill) Didycz. She was his loving wife and companion in the truest sense for 57 years.

Kay absolutely loved being a homemaker. As a young wife she sewed her own dresses as well as curtains and draperies for her home. She was a fantastic wife and mother and had a kind word for everyone. Her cooking cannot be overstated. Her older children grew up hearing their father's appreciative nightly proclamation that dinner was "a taste bonanza". The list of her delicious meals is extensive. Kay always dressed well and looked sharp.

After having four children, Kay started attending night school at the University of Pittsburgh. Although she initially planned to major in her favorite subject, home economics, after several years of night classes she got a degree to teach elementary school. She graduated from college around the time her older children graduated from high school and taught in the Baldwin-Whitehall School District.

During that time she moved to a larger house, in Whitehall, perfect for entertaining and celebrating life events. As a hostess, Kay was the definition of gracious. She loved having company and hosted many Didycz and Salapow family events, dinner parties, and backyard barbeques. Attending family events and keeping the family together and connected were always priorities. She used her hobbies to show her love for her family, making significant creations such as a wedding gown, a prom dress, and more.

She attended the First Unitarian Church of Pittsburgh for many years and was an active member of its Women's Alliance. She also attended "club", the monthly card club of her sisters and other friends and family, from the beginning of time until this year. Catching up on family news and playing cards, both activities she enjoyed.

Her teaching career ended at age 58 when her aortic heart valve gave out. Her family would like to thank Dr. George Magovern, Sr. of Allegheny General Hospital, for developing the mechanical heart valve that gave her an additional 32 years of a rich and full life, and Dr. George Magovern, Jr. for implanting it.

In 2009, her husband Bill passed away. The next year Kay sold her home of over 30 years and moved to the Embassy of Asbury Heights, in Mt. Lebanon, an independent living community for seniors. She couldn't have had a better experience or place to live. True to form, she was instrumental in planning social events, including movie nights, pizza nights, and catered dinners for the Embassy residents.

The support that the Embassy staff and friends provided her, especially this past year, was wonderful and very much appreciated. They added memories of comfort during this very difficult time.

Kay is survived by sisters Rose (Frank) Niespodzianski and Jean Goldbach, children William (Kathleen) Davis, Nina (Joseph) Balsamo, Andrei (Maggi) Didycz, and Robert (the late Lisa) Didycz (partner Debra Hobbs); grandchildren Catherine (Sharef Farrag) Balsamo, Emily (Patrick McWilliams) Balsamo, Julie Balsamo, Alexander Didycz, Cassandra (Drew) Arnold, Nicholas Didycz, Andrew Didycz, and Brendan Didycz; great-grandchildren Vivienne Arnold and Francesca Lise Balsamo-McWilliams, and many nieces and nephews. Kay was preceded in death by her parents; brothers John, William, and Michael Salapow; and sisters Helen Koslosky and Nina Sherman.

Friends and family will be received Friday, December 1, from 2-4 and 6-8 p.m. at the **WILLIAM SLATER II FUNERAL SERVICE**, 1650 Greentree Road, Scott Twp., 412-563-2800, where a memorial service will be held on Saturday, December 2, at 11 a.m. Condolences may be offered for the family at SlaterFuneral.com.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions in Kay's name may be made to the American Heart Association.



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