

SHIRLEY ANN CATHERINE (HART) THENS



Age 83, passed away peacefully on October 28, 2024, in her home in Etna, Pennsylvania.

Born on November 13, 1940, in Albany, New York, Shirley grew up in Rensselaer, New York where she became a lifelong fan of the Brooklyn (later L.A.) Dodgers, Boston Celtics, Notre Dame and Syracuse college teams. The youngest of three children, she had fond memories of watching sports and

spending time with her father while her older siblings had the freedom at their age to spend time outside with their friends.

After graduating from St. John's Academy of Rensselaer High School, Shirley worked at Bell Telephone as an Operator, following in her father and sibling's footsteps working for the Bell telephone company in various roles.

In March 1962, Shirley joined the United States Navy with her high school friend, Barbara (Smith) McDonald and served honorably for three years as a Hospital Corpswave Nurse's Aide at the US Naval Hospital in Jacksonville, Florida. In basic training, Shirley made a lifelong friend in Barbara Hemphill, commenting that every time she turned around when they were in formation or line going from one location to another, "Hempy" was there saying "hello" and they grew to be close friends. While stationed in Jacksonville, Shirley met her future husband, another Navy Hospital Corpsman, Harry Thens, from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. After both had been honorably discharged from the US Navy, they married in May 1966 and Shirley relocated from upstate New York to Pittsburgh and began the process of learning to ask for "pop" instead of "soda."

Shirley became a diehard Pittsburgh Pirates, Steeler, Penguins and University of Pittsburgh fan and her love of watching and listening to sports on the radio never dimmed throughout the rest of her long life. Shirley's allegiance to Notre Dame knew no boundaries, she even took her thirteen-year-old son, Peter, to a Pitt - Notre Dame game after receiving tickets in the Pitt alumni section and both Shirley and Peter had the determination to still root for Notre Dame. They received a lot of strange looks that day.

Shirley's professional career was diverse, for many years Shirley worked as a Bank Teller in Lawrenceville, Aspinwall and The Waterworks. Shirley worked in Sharpsburg as a Medical Coder and at Don Allen Chevrolet in Shadyside as a Customer Representative.

Shirley volunteered for various organizations including the Parent Teacher Association, Christian Mothers, U.S. Navy Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service (WAVES), and the Women's Overseas Service League. Shirley's volunteering even led to her being awarded the prestigious Jefferson Award for Public Service.

Shirley was a life-long practicing Roman Catholic and member of Christ the King Parish. Shirley dedicated much of her life to her family and community, embodying the role of a loving mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother. Her faith and her family were her foremost priority, often reflected in her fervent prayers and her famous saying, "I don't want to be a bother."

Shirley is survived by her son, Peter (Annmarie) Thens; daughter, Kathleen Thens-Tommasin (Gary, deceased); grandchildren, Kazzandra (Nick) Pike, Arran Thens, Christy Tommasin, and Jacob Tommasin; and great-grandchildren, Elliot Pike and Judith Tommasin-Bossola. She was preceded in death by her beloved husband, Harry J. Thens; her parents, Thomas F. Hart, Sr. and Florence (Endres) Hart; her brother, Thomas F. Hart, Jr.; and her sister, Marilyn Hart.

A Funeral Mass will be held at Christ The King Parish, in Madonna of Jerusalem Church, 201 9th Street, Sharpsburg, PA 15215, on Friday, November 8, 2024, at 10:30 a.m. Shirley will be laid to rest beside her husband, Harry at St. Mary's Church Cemetery, Sharps Hill Rd., Sharpsburg, PA, following the mass.

In lieu of flowers, contributions to any women's veteran group in Shirley's name would be greatly appreciated, honoring her passion for supporting women veterans.

Arrangements entrusted to **SLATER FUNERAL & CREMATION SERVICES, INC. SHARPSBURG.**



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