

# KATHRYN L. (WARD) RUDY



On February 18, 2025, Kathy unexpectedly died, at the age of 77. Kathy was born in Baltimore, MD and was the daughter of Robert Dickey Ward, II and Isabel Posey Galbreath Ward.

Kathy was the beloved wife of Denis Rudy for 51 years. They grew their family proudly in East Pittsburgh and later in life resided in North Versailles.

She was the loving mother of Suzanne Rudy of Johnstown, Jason (Jamie) Rudy of Clearfield and Megan (Dario) Barišić of Aspinwall.

Kathy was knowingly loved as "Nana" by her ten grandchildren: Trenton Gerbi, Kaleigh Owens, Chloe Strushensky; twins, Ian and Delaney Strushensky, Aidan Rudy, Madeline Rudy and Aspen Rudy, Niko Barišić and Ivanka Barišić. She also was the proud great-grandmother of Lamar, Hayden and Jaylen. Kathy was the beloved sister of Margaret (Edward) Ballantine, Robert (Nancy) Ward and John Ward. She will be remembered by her nieces and nephews whom she loved dearly. "Aunt Kathy" will always hold a special place in the hearts of extended family and she was endearingly referred to as "Mama Rudy" by those who she considered family.

Kathy was a native of Aberdeen, MD and earned her Bachelor's degree from West Virginia Wesleyan and her Masters in Social Work from West Virginia University. At "almost heaven," she met the love of her life, Denny.

Kathy's professional journey began at the Philadelphia Office of the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare, where she took her first steps in a career focused on child welfare. It was during her tenure at the Office of Child Development at the University of Pittsburgh that Kathy made a significant contribution: the establishment of "Care Break." This pioneering agency provided much-needed respite care for handicapped children, a service that would eventually be administered by the D.T. Watson Institute, ensuring its lasting impact on the community. Kathy's compassionate vision continued as she rose to become the Director of Community and Internal Services at the University of Pittsburgh.

In this role, she authored the White Paper that revolutionized care for children in Russian orphanages. She also served firms as a consultant for international adoptions.

Truly a trailblazer, Kathy was honored as a Founder of the Fatherhood Movement in Western Pennsylvania. She was instrumental in building the foundation that supports fathers in their vital role in the well being of their children.

Although Kathy never brought work home, she brought people home. The life experiences she shared with her family created a circle of global friendships and for that her family will forever be thankful.

Kathy's zest for life shone through in her love for sports. A die-hard fan, she and her beloved, Denny, held Pittsburgh Steelers season tickets for 50 plus years. She was known for her creativity and skill in quilting and also found joy and camaraderie in her book club, Bible study group and yoga. She was a support of all things Tamburitians and what her children and grandchildren were involved in. Some of Kathy's favorite memories were made at the beach and in the mountains with family and the Cook Forest crew.

Above all, Kathy's most cherished moments were those spent with her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. That role she held most dear. She and Denny were known to have an open door policy. She cherished every moment to be called "Kathy," "Kath," "Nana," "Aunt Kathy," and "Mama Rudy." If you needed an ear to listen, she was there. If you needed a meal to eat, it was there. She was known for her random deliveries of brownies and other sweets. She was a positive light that spread globally.

Kathy Rudy's life was a tapestry of service, love and unwavering commitment to the betterment of others.

All are welcome to a Memorial Visitation, on Monday, from 2-7 p.m., at **PATRICK T. LANIGAN FUNERAL HOME & CREMATORY, INC.**, 700 Linden Ave., at Cable, East Pittsburgh, PA 15112, (412)-824-8800.

Mass of Christian Burial will be in St. Colman Church of St. Joseph the Worker Parish on Tuesday at 10 a.m.

Folks attending the Mass should gather at St. Colman Church.

Kathy will be entombed privately at Braddock Catholic cemetery.

In honor of Kathryn's life of service, we ask that in lieu of flowers, donations may be made in honor of a dear friend and colleague to the Dr. Christina J. Groark Community

Engagement Award at the Pitt Office of Child Development Giving Link. Those interested in mailing a gift can send their gifts to: University of Pittsburgh, P.O. Box 640093, Pittsburgh, PA 15264-0093. Any questions, please contact Michael Haas at mbh26@pitt.edu or 412-648-1789.

Send condolences [post-gazette.com/gb](http://post-gazette.com/gb)