



## LORRAINE JOHANNA KOEL

December 30, 1921 - May 4, 2020

Lorraine “Lori” Johanna Koel, 98, of Rochester Minnesota died peacefully in her sleep on May 4, 2020 at Madonna Towers Skilled Nursing Facility in Rochester Minnesota.

She was born to Nicholas and Lucille Palen Koel on December 30, 1921, just before her twin sister, Elaine, in her family home in Caledonia Minnesota. Following graduation from Loretto High School in 1938, she entered nurses training at St. Mary’s Hospital in Rochester. She earned her RN degree and worked briefly at the Caledonia Hospital before returning to Rochester to begin her lifelong career as a surgical nurse. With skill and determination she became a head nurse in surgery and played a role in teaching the new residents, many of whom went on to become renowned surgeons. She was known for her high standards in patient care, and was proud to be an RN and a member of the Mayo family. Although she retired after 35 years of service, her interest in medicine continued and she maintained her license for many years.

Following retirement, Lori gave of herself in volunteering for many local groups including the Rochester Flower and Garden Club, Friends of Mayowood, Olmsted County Historical Society, and her condo association. She found joy in world travel throughout her life including trips to Hawaii, Cuba, Kenya, Australia, and New Zealand. She took many winter vacations

through the years to Mexico where she would put her Spanish lessons to good use. On her travels, she enjoyed making new friends and collecting fascinating memorabilia. Her home at Lakeview Court seemed to burst at the seams with small treasures. She found great pleasure in gazing out at Lake George no matter what the season, and in taking daily walks on its paths, weather permitting. She kept fit into her ninth decade with stationary biking while residing at Madonna Meadows Assisted Living, and would participate in whatever activities her physical limitations would allow. Unfortunately a fall last summer took its toll and necessitated a transfer to a higher level of care at Madonna Towers Skilled Nursing Facility.

Although Lori had no children of her own, she was an active presence for her many nieces and nephews. She would often return to Caledonia on weekends to participate in family events. She was a devout Catholic and she and her twin sister would frequently end conversations by saying they were praying for each other.

She is survived by her sister Marita (George) Smith, and her nieces and nephews: Clare Blexrud Liebe, John Blexrud, Patricia Wagner Pietre, Paul Wagner, Marianne Wagner Schultz, Jo Ann Wagner Schmitz, Stephen Danaher, Sharon Danaher Hagler, Jeanne Danaher Wright, Marcia Danaher Kreycik, Patrick Danaher, Gregory Danaher, Susan Danaher Schmidtke, Kathleen Smith Seal, Colleen Smith Vollenweider, Tom Smith, Linda Smith Gillette, Jerry Smith, and Michael Smith. She was preceded in death by her brother, Donald Koel; three sisters, Bernadine (Henry) Blexrud, Lucille (Orval) Wagner, and her twin, Elaine (Robert) Danaher; nephews Michael Wagner and Kevin Danaher; and nieces Susan Blexrud, Kathleen Wagner, and Diane Smith. She was also preceded in death by her good friend and companion, Dr. C.R. Holland.

Due to the COVID-19 restrictions, there will be a private family ceremony and

a Mass of Christian Burial on Saturday, May 9 in Caledonia Minnesota with interment at Calvary Cemetery afterward. In lieu of flowers, donations are suggested to Mayo Hospice or a charity of your choice.

# Tribute Wall



“ *Mc Cormick Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of LORRAINE JOHANNA KOEL*



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**Mc Cormick Funeral Home** - May 09, 2020 at 01:04 PM

SH

“ *9 files added to the album Memories Album*



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**Sharon Danaher Hagler** - May 09, 2020 at 01:42 AM

MK

“ Aunt Lori had a great appetite for life including travel, delicious food (Michael's), and stylish clothing. Although she was an 'identical twin' to my mother Elaine, she had a bit of a different approach to her life adding unique spice with her wit, her international perspective, and her special brand of wardrobe generosity!

*I was fortunate to be Lori's willing companion throughout my life. From childhood visits, while deciding to become a nurse, through young adulthood (as a recipient of real hand-written letters from Lori), and into my family building time, Lori served as a special role model. Lori was my accomplice in raising kids with a unique perspective on the world. She helped me introduce my kids to ice cream (!), drowning worms, dancing around the lakes in the Twin Cities, and the beauty of Hiawatha Falls. We continued our times together into her ninth decade, she generously allowed me and Keith to enjoy life in Rochester in her condo on Lake George for months. Thank goodness, she never asked how her plants were doing! As her vision and hearing dimmed, her wit brightened. Sometimes, hours after a visit with Lori, Keith would burst out laughing, citing Lori's verbal jab that he finally caught.*

*Lori, we will continue to toast you with a secret Grey Goose for you and a Rob Roy for your sister!*

*With love, Marcia*

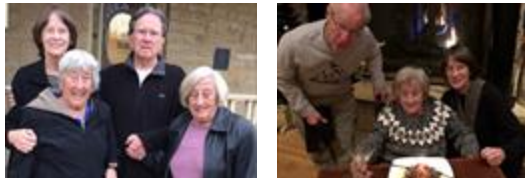


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Marcia Danaher Kreycik - May 09, 2020 at 01:28 AM

SH

“ So many childhood memories of Lori’s visits back to Caledonia on weekends. Then came chapter 2 in 1971 when I moved to Rochester to take a position at Mayo Clinic. She took me under her wing and chauffeured me everywhere until she bought her Thunderbird and sold me her Mercury Montclair for \$1.00. She had my kids over to her condo for Mac and cheese, fishing off the pier, and long walks around Lake George. They had great fun feeding the geese at Silver Lake, and exploring Mayowood. She spent most holidays with us unless, as she would say, she got a better offer. Chapter 3 was marked by Mother Elaine’s move to Rochester in 1994 after Dad passed away the previous year. The Twins each had their own condos on Lake George, but after so many years of leading such different lives, they were together again. Chapter 4 began about 6 years ago when both Mom and Lori’s injuries from falls and loss of vision due to macular degeneration made it too difficult to live alone in their respective 2nd floor condos. Adjusting to Assisted Living was not easy for either of these independent ladies but they made the best of it. Mom passed away in 2018, and now Lori has joined her. I was so privileged to be a part of Lori’s life, especially during this last chapter. She will be dearly missed. *Requiescat in pacem.*”



Sharon Danaher Hagler - May 09, 2020 at 12:26 AM

SH

“ 2 files added to the tribute wall



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**Sharon Hagler** - May 08, 2020 at 10:14 PM

JD

“ *My sweet Auntie, Lori. So many memories, laughs and special moments. I will miss you. Say hi to mom for me.*

*Jeanne (Eensie) Danaher*



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**Jeanne Marie Danaher** - May 08, 2020 at 10:14 PM

SS

“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



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**Sue Schmidtke** - May 08, 2020 at 09:50 PM

SS

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



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**Sue Schmidtke** - May 08, 2020 at 09:30 PM

SS

*Many wonder times with these ladies. They will be deeply missed. Now the twins are together again. Love you both so much, Susie*

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**Sue Schmidtke** - May 08, 2020 at 09:34 PM

SH

“ ❤️ Sharon Hagler



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**Sharon Hagler** - May 08, 2020 at 05:42 PM

CH

“ My favorite memories of Aunt Lori were when we would take walks around Lake George, looking for wild onions, blue bells and deer. We would go fishing off the dock or throw bread to the fishes, just enjoying the time outside together. Lori would always have stories to tell us about her days at Mayo as we were gifted Werther’s, much more than I could eat. It was such a treat to go with her to the Mayowood Mansion to take care of the flowers and explore the grounds. I loved how she decorated her condo, full of cool objects from distant lands and sunflower decor. I miss you Lori so much! It hurts that we can’t hug you now but at least you are once again with Grandma Elaine, the cutest twins I know!



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**Catherine Hagler** - May 08, 2020 at 02:58 PM

CL

“ So good to hear of the many memories of our dear Auntie Lori. She was indeed a special woman- so caring, thoughtful and generous with all of us nieces and nephews. Her call was to serve in the medical field and she did that with intentional focus. In checking out the meaning of her name - Lorraine - WOMAN OF COURAGE - Isaiah 12:2 - that was who she was!!  
The memory of her will live on in our hearts.

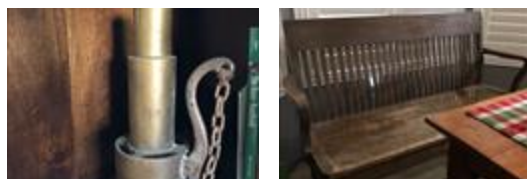
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**Clare Blexrud Liebe** - May 07, 2020 at 07:09 PM

MS

“ I too have fond memories of Aunt Lori. I remember going for rides in her car as she would come up and visit with us on High Street. When I was younger I stayed with her a few times in Rochester. We would go shopping and of course end the day for dinner at Michaels, where everyone knew her by name. The boys and I stayed with her at her at her condo, when we were there for a 2 day soccer tournament. Both of my boys have fond memories from that stay. She wanted to wait on them hand and foot. I bonded closely with Lori when she had her estate sale. I was at her house and she was overwhelmed with all of the collectibles and antiques that she had and now needed to move out of the property. Dealers and collectors were approaching her to buy some of the items, I knew that they were going to take advantage of her. She asked if I could help her and I took on that request and ran. As anyone in the family knows, this was a HUGE undertaking, which resulted in a 3-4 day auction. This was by far the largest amount of collectibles and antiques that I had ever seen, being put into one sale. I found an auctioneer in Houston County, who I knew from attending sales and he took it on. His eyes popped out of his head when we went to view her belongings. I worked hand in hand with Lori for over a week to get some sense of order for the sale, deciding what she would keep and what she was selling. I will never forget that experience with Lori, where the 2 of us worked hard together to accomplish something that seemed impossible. I bought a ton of items at the sale myself, but here are two of the items that Lori gave me for giving of my time and effort. Every day when I see these collectibles, I think of Lori. The one item is a steam whistle from a locomotive of days gone by. The bench came from the Mayo Clinic in its early days. This is my pride and joy. Lori was very compassionate and giving.

Marianne (Wagner) Schultz



Marianne Schultz - May 06, 2020 at 05:46 PM

JA

“ *Enjoyed our visits with auntie Lori and the many luncheons with her. Also staying with her in Rochester as a little girl was always a fun adventure! Of course there was always an outing to Michael's Restaurant.*

*Jo Ann Wagner Schmitz*



Jo Ann Axhmitz - May 06, 2020 at 03:26 PM

JB

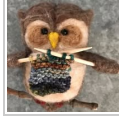
“ *Of the many fond memories I have of both my twin aunties the ones that stand out the most about Lori are that she would always give you an embarrassingly (for us boys) big kiss on the cheek immediately followed by wiping off the red lipstick mark with her thumb. And, she was always extremely generous with birthday and Christmas gifts, but somehow managed to forget to remove the price tags. Oh, and she loved convertibles. I'll bet she's driving one now in Heaven with the top down. John Blexrud*

John Blexrud - May 06, 2020 at 01:40 PM

MK

*I love the idea of Lori in a convertible. Great for keeping ones tan in prime condition!*

Marcia Kreycik - May 06, 2020 at 04:18 PM



*And remember Lori's Thunderbird. She loved that car.*

*I had to smile when reading John Blehrud's post. I think many of us share the memories of Lori's lipstick ritual and gift giving. Sometimes the gifts were a bit unusual, like the time she came home for the weekend and presented our family with a long haired dachshund puppy - no discussion ahead of time with our parents about adding to our household of 10. We did have Rusty for a few years until our parents thought he would be happier at Grandpa Nick's farm. Then Lori came home with Charlie, a Boxer puppy. Charlie went back to Rochester with Lori ...*

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**Sharon Hagler** - May 07, 2020 at 05:17 PM

SM

“ You are in our thoughts and prayers during this difficult time. Thank you for sharing your Aunt Lori with us at Madonna Meadows/Madonna Towers/Madonna Living Community (MLC).

*Sandy Molenda; MLC Foundation*

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**sandy molenda** - May 06, 2020 at 01:25 PM

PK

“ Visiting Lori was always a special treat for me and Claire. We loved exploring her condo and hearing stories about all the exotic souvenirs she had collected during her travels. It was like being transported to a magical faraway place every time. We also have fond memories of fishing on the dock at her place on Lake George with our Mickey and Minney Mouse fishing rods. When we actually caught some tiny sunfish we were both so scared that we needed her help taking the hook out. Once we dropped one of the fishing rods from the dock, requiring the adults to dive down into the water to retrieve it. We'll always think fondly of those fun visits!

*- Philip Kreycik*

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**Philip Kreycik** - May 06, 2020 at 11:00 AM

MK

“ 1 file added to the album *A Wonderful Life*



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**Marcia Kreycik** - May 06, 2020 at 10:26 AM

GD

*Wonderful tribute to a fantastic lady. You will be missed!*

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**greg danaher** - May 06, 2020 at 11:02 AM

MK

“ 3 files added to the album *Memories Album*



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**Marcia Kreycik** - May 05, 2020 at 07:42 PM

MK

“ 3 files added to the album *Memories Album*



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**Marcia Kreycik** - May 05, 2020 at 07:39 PM

EV

*We send our caring thoughts to Lori's wonderful family - she was generous, but so were you in your care and support for her. We were so fortunate to have Lori and Elaine as owner in our condominium for many years. Lori was always quick to help in whatever way she could and took on the job for many years of delivering copies of minutes around to everyone. She will be in our hearts and thoughts. Ella and Glenn VanLaningham*

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**Ella and Glenn VanLaningham** - February 23, 2021 at 02:49 PM