



Mary Dee Catania

March 17, 1928 - October 23, 2011

Mary "Dee" Ashley Catania 83, of Benton Harbor formerly of Watervliet, surrounded by her family, passed away when she lost her fight with cancer and her Lord called her home on October 23, 2011.

Dee was born on March 17, 1928 in Knobel, AR to Edgar and Delphia Ashley. Her family moved to Benton Harbor when she was nine years old. Dee was a graduate of Benton Harbor High School in 1946. She worked as a waitress at a young age, switchboard operator for Bell Telephone, volunteered as Den Mother for Cub Scouts, Girl Scout/Brownie leader, became a hair dresser in the late 1960's, was a reporter for the Tri-City Record, and retired in 1997 from the Berrien County Health Department. Dee was a member of the Coloma American Legion Post 362, Coloma United Methodist Church and Creative Artists Guild of Southwestern Michigan.

Dee was both an artist and a writer, which four of her poems and literary works were published. She loved flower gardening, crafts, knitting, crocheting, music of all kinds, live theatre, reading, sewing, baking, dancing and singing. She learned to paint later in life. Her largest painting was a lighthouse on her garage door. Dee always wanted to play the guitar. She felt she was the "first" Martha Stewart. Most would remember her by the hats she wore. Dee was a caring, gentle spirit who nurtured her family. She really enjoyed time with family and friends.

She is survived by her children, Jim "Allen" (Janice) Catania of Bridgman, Anthony (Patti) Catania of South Haven, Marie Catania of Benton Harbor, Beth (Timothy) Reiter of Auburndale, FL, and Dawn (Gary) Mitchell of Benton Harbor; sister Sandy (Thomas) Billington of Drasco, AR; 7 grandchildren, 2 great grandchildren; a host of nieces, nephews, great nieces and nephews, cousins and friends. She was preceded in death by her parents, 3 brothers, 3 sisters and a grand-daughter.

Services celebrating her life will be held at 11 AM on Saturday, October 29, at Dey-Florin Chapel in St. Joseph. A private burial will be at Crystal Springs Cemetery. The family will receive friends and relatives from 5 PM to 8 PM on Friday October 28, at Dey-Florin Chapel in St. Joseph. Memorials may be made to the Coloma American Legion Post 362, the VFW Post 1137 Benton Harbor or Hospice at Home St. Joseph. Please share memories and photos at www.florin.net.

Previous Events

Visitation

OCT 28. 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Dey-Florin Chapel of Florin Funeral Service - Closed 2013

2506 Niles Avenue

St. Joseph, MI 49085

(269) 983-1514

staff@florin.net

Service

OCT 29. 11:00 AM (ET)

Dey-Florin Chapel of Florin Funeral Service - Closed 2013

2506 Niles Avenue

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Tribute Wall

DK

“ *Dee was always such a gentle kind person, very quiet but there was never any doubt that her family meant everything to her. She was very talented and did so many things so well in such an unassuming manner. She raised a fine family and will be missed by so many.*

Donna Krieger

Florida

Donna Krieger - November 29, 2011 at 10:39 AM

DS

“ *Marie & Dawn & family:*

So sorry to hear about your mom. She made the flowers for our hair for Gloria's wedding, remember Marie. I did not know she was so artistic. Working as a reporter & those paintings, amazing.

Love you guys, Dona Shafer

Dona Shafer - October 29, 2011 at 08:47 PM

DC

“ *Diana L. Cotter lit a candle in memory of Mary Dee Catania*



Diana L. Cotter - October 29, 2011 at 02:18 PM

RA

“ *Marie, Tony, Beth, Dawn & Family*

Heartfelt condolences out to all of you. I know this is a very difficult time for your family. Rejoice in her life, she is at peace.

Warmest Regards

Randy & Vickie Anderson Family

Randy Anderson - October 29, 2011 at 09:03 AM

CM

“ *Dawnie and Beth and family~ I am so saddened by your mom's passing. She was a wonderful woman. She will always be there with you everyday! I love you all! Hugs!*

Colleen Morlock - October 29, 2011 at 08:53 AM



“ *I am so so sad that you are gone from this earth, but, I am not greiving for you I am greiving for myself because I can't come see you any more. You are no longer in pain and that is a blessing, you did not deserve to suffer. You were the most gracious and loving person to everyone you met. I think the only person I loved more was my mom and she was there waiting for you. I am PROUD to have been named after you, I feel for your children friends and all of your family because we have lost the most loving, caring, gifted person I know. I will miss you Aunt Dee but, I will see you again. Your loving niece, Mary*



Mary Dean - October 27, 2011 at 04:11 PM

FB

“ *Faye Blackburn lit a candle in memory of Mary Dee Catania*



Faye Blackburn - October 27, 2011 at 12:08 PM

NC

“ *Norma Jean Cobb-Pratt lit a candle in memory of Mary Dee Catania*



Norma Jean Cobb-Pratt - October 27, 2011 at 11:25 AM

BS

“ Dear Catania Family:

I was saddened to hear of the loss of you mother. I have so many memories of her, and your family going back to the early 60's. She was always a thoughtful, soft spoken, and very interesting lady. It was always crystal clear how much love, and pride she had for all of you. My thoughts and prayers are with you at this time of loss. Even though her leaving was inevitable, it is comforting to know that she is no longer in pain. As for myself, I can truly say that my life is richer having known you mother. God Bless.

Bill Schueneman and family

Bill Schueneman - October 27, 2011 at 04:48 AM

LT

“ Dawn,

I remember your mother as a very kind and sweet lady. You and your family have my deepest heartfelt sympathy. May God Bless and keep you in his care.

Sincerely,

Lenore Taylor

Lenore Taylor - October 26, 2011 at 06:57 PM

SK

“ *I remember working with Dee at the health department. She was indeed a sweetheart. Am thinking of you, Allen, and your family. Blessings, Shirley Kowerduck*

Shirley Kowerduck - October 26, 2011 at 04:25 PM

MA

“ *Mr. & Mrs Randy Anderson lit a candle in memory of Mary Dee Catania*



Mr. & Mrs Randy Anderson - October 26, 2011 at 09:27 AM

SB

“ Susie McClanahan Burkhardt lit a candle in memory of Mary Dee Catania



Susie McClanahan Burkhardt - October 25, 2011 at 06:56 PM

SB

Mom, I am going to miss you so much. I am so glad though that you are no longer in any pain. Dont worry I will keep an eye on Dawnie and take care of her for you. I love you forever and will never forget all the years of memories we have.

Susie McClanahan Burkhardt - October 25, 2011 at 06:58 PM

DA

“ DarcyMarkBrad lit a candle in memory of Mary Dee Catania



DarcyMarkBrad - October 25, 2011 at 12:10 PM

KM

“ Karen McAndrew lit a candle in memory of Mary Dee Catania



Karen McAndrew - October 24, 2011 at 07:31 PM

PS

“ Pat Stephen lit a candle in memory of Mary Dee Catania



Pat Stephen - October 24, 2011 at 03:35 PM

PS

Dawn so sorry the pain for the living will always be there but the pain for your mom is gone and she is now at peace

Pat Stephen - October 26, 2011 at 06:53 PM

BK

“ *Barb Klatt lit a candle in memory of Mary Dee Catania*



Barb Klatt - October 24, 2011 at 12:59 PM

BK

I worked with Dee at BCHD. She was such a kind and gentle person who always had a smile to share. God has chosen to take a true angel home. My prayers for her family.

Barb Klatt - October 24, 2011 at 01:02 PM