



Lois E. Barnett

July 19, 1933 - December 8, 2012

LOIS' LIFE STORY: Lois returned home to her Lord and Savior on Saturday, December 8, 2012. Her life ended in the same peaceful manner as it began, with her joyous smile lighting up the lives of those who cared for her. The staff of Nottingham Place in Midland proved wonderful stewards of her care and comfort throughout the last 10 months of her life, giving her not just a place to dance, but reasons to smile. Born in Scottville, Michigan in 1933, Lois was the third and youngest child of Katherine and Leo LaPointe. When she was just three years old, the family moved to the Underwood Farm in Carr Settlement, where the young Lois and her two older brothers, Edward and Maurice, learned the true meaning of love and service. Her mother, a teacher in a small, one-room school house, also gave piano lessons and taught horsemanship to many of the girls in Carr Settlement. Lois learned how to sew by watching her mother make clothes for those in need. Her father, a successful farmer, would often share food from the farm with those who were hungry. Lois began her lifelong passion of caring for others by tending to the needs of the farm's many animals, always adopting a pig, a calf, a fawn or perhaps a lamb or two who would follow her around the farm. As she got older, Lois developed a love for horses and began looking forward to Sunday afternoons, which she spent riding horses with her friends in the woods around the farm. She was active in 4-H, winning many awards for her horsemanship, sewing clothes, and — her husband's favorite — baking pies. Always full of life and energy, Lois spread school spirit as a cheerleader and was honored as Mason County Dairy Princess while still a young adult. She loved to have fun, whether it be dancing, roller skating or ice skating, and her enjoyment of these activities proved infectious to everyone in her life. Getting her start in a one-room schoolhouse, Lois then went on to Mason County Public School in Baldwin and then St. Simons in nearby Ludington where she boarded with a family in town, providing after-school care for their 5 children in lieu of paying rent. After graduating high school, Lois attended Mercy School for Practical Nursing in Cadillac, receiving her certificate in 1953. During the tumultuous years of the Korean War, Lois wrote letters to all the young men who left the settlement to join the fighting overseas. One young man wrote back, and the two exchanged letters quite frequently. The son of her mother's best friend, Robert (Bob) Barnett was not considered a serious suitor because he was not Catholic. Lois made her reservations

known from the start, but she liked him and they continued to write each other. Unbeknownst by Lois, Bob was bunking with a Catholic priest while in flight school, and converted to Catholicism before coming home on leave. He shared the news—and a marriage proposal—while hiking the sand dunes at Ludington State Park. The two wed on September 4, 1954, joining four of the original families of Carr Settlement. The two lived a typical military life for many years while Bob was in the service, moving from Kansas to Rhode Island to Michigan to Hawaii. When Bob retired from the US Navy, Petroleum Helicopters (PHI) wooed the family into settling down in Lafayette, Louisiana. There they stayed for 13 years, raising their five children. Lois and Bob sacrificed a great deal to put their children through Catholic schools, in which Lois was a firm believer. An active member of Holy Cross Church and a Girl Scout leader, Lois busied herself with community service and playing bridge with the PHI Wives Club. The family enjoyed regular camping trips in a pop-up trailer, sometimes just for weekends, but often for weeks at a time during the warmer summer months. Her children are William Searle, born in 1956 in Quonset Pointe, Rhode Island; Kathleen Marie, born in Mount Pleasant, MI in 1957; Cynthia Lynn, born in Dearborn, MI in 1958; Deborah Ann, born in Ewa, Hawaii in 1961; and James Leo, born in Ewa, Hawaii in 1962. It was a very sad Christmas in 1959 when Lois gave birth to a baby who died later the same day. Originally her name was going to be Agatha, after Bob's mother who recently had passed, but the name was changed to Jennifer Lynn. Her young body was buried in the Custer cemetery, but Lois believed her spirit lived on as her personal guardian angel. In 1977, Lois and Bob returned to Michigan and bought a campground on Hamlin Lake, where they lived with their youngest three children. When Bob passed away in 1987, the campground was sold and Lois moved back to the LaPointe family farm in Carr where she had been raised. There, she re-established deep and meaningful relationships with those who lived on and near the farm. Lois sold the house in 2000 to her nephew and returned to Louisiana to spend time with her grandchildren. She took great delight in going to their ball games and staying with them after school—though truth be told, they often spent more time eating cookies and playing cards, than doing homework. Gulf Shores, Alabama became a favorite vacation spot, especially for Easter and included Barnetts, LaPointes, and many friends. For most of her life, Lois was a stay-at-home mom, though she worked part-time as an LPN at a dermatology clinic in Lafayette while the kids were in school. It was always important for her to be home when her children got off the bus, and most days she had a special snack waiting for them. In Michigan, she picked up winter hours at the hospital in Ludington. Later, she offered her services with the Baldwin Family clinic as part of the traveling blood pressure clinics and provided respite in-home care to the sick and aged, where she was honored for her services. Lois had a heart of gold. She was known for taking in stray animals and wayward teens. She frequently fed extra mouths at the dinner table, be they nephews, grandsons, or her children's friends. She loved them all and preached

forgiveness with her actions. She had a passion for music, dancing and playing cards that lasted throughout her life. Regardless of where they lived, Lois loved to have a vegetable garden and tried to grow roses. Her favorite vacation spot was any sandy beach, but she also loved camping anywhere the family's pop-up trailer might go. She was active with the Altar Society in the Catholic Church and often the choir. She volunteered and helped raise money for the Cancer Society and MDA. Lois was diagnosed with Alzheimer's in 2002, but that was changed to Primary Progressive Aphasia just three years later. A cruel disease, PPA takes away one's ability to communicate, but is not necessarily accompanied by the memory loss that is typical of Alzheimer's. No longer able to sufficiently care for herself, Lois moved in with her daughter Cynthia and son-in-law Larry in Midland, Michigan in December 2008. She had several special caregivers, including her granddaughter Jessica. In 2012 she moved into a nearby assisted living home called Nottingham Place of Midland, where she peacefully passed into heaven 10 months later. Her caregivers share numerous stories of her trying to take care of them or the other residents, despite her limited speech capability. Special memories include her endless supply of chocolate chip cookies, underground muffins, rum-fruit cake, asparagus everything (which she often helped pick on the farm), her love for line-dancing, and river trips -- either in a canoe or white-water rafting. Most of her grandchildren and a few of the nieces and nephews will no doubt always remember her excited "Ta-Da!" when they finished their glass of milk. Ever a loving servant to her family and all those around her, Lois holds a special place in all of our hearts. We know that Lois, in the tender company of her husband, has finally found eternal peace and happiness in the arms of the Lord. Lois will be greatly missed by her 5 children: William (Jessie Pal-ing) Barnett of Youngsville, LA; Kathleen Barnett of Broussard, LA; Cynthia (Larry) Woiderski of Midland, MI; Deborah (Mark) Buteau, and James (Jeana) Barnett all of Youngsville, LA, fourteen grandchildren, eleven great-grandchildren, her sisters-in-law: Glenna LaPointe of Branch, MI; Patsy LaPointe of Purdon, Texas, and Sally Owen of Westland, MI, her brother-in-law Sam Barnett of Branch, MI, and numerous nieces and nephews. She is predeceased by her parents, her husband Robert Barnett in August 1987, her brothers Edward and Maurice LaPointe in 2011, and by baby Jennifer Lynn in 1959. The Mass of Christian burial will be celebrated for Lois on Friday, December 14 at 11:00 AM at Blessed Sacrament Church, 3109 Swede Avenue, Midland with Rev. Pete Gaspeny and Rev. Joe Fix as con-celebrants. The family will receive relatives and friends at the church starting at 10 AM. A lunch will be available immediately following the mass and burial will take place at 4:00PM at St. Mary's Cemetery in Custer. Those planning an expression of sympathy are asked to consider The Alzheimer's Association, The American Cancer Society, or St. Jude's Children Hospital in lieu of flowers. THE FOLLOWING LINK WILL TAKE YOU DIRECTLY TO LOIS' DONATION SITE WITH THE ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION: (You will need to copy and paste the location into your browser) <https://secure3.4agoodcause.com/afa/fundraisers/pe>

