



## Mary L. Nichols

July 26, 1956 - June 21, 2023

“If you serve with love, you will love to serve”

Mary Lou Cooper Nichols age 66 of Scottville passed away June 21, 2023 after a valiant eighteen month battle with cancer. The Cooper family farm in Riverton Township was where she lived from birth through childhood, married and raised her children, and enjoyed a lifetime of tending seeds in her garden from sprout to harvest for preparing and preserving the delicious meals that appeared on the dining tables of her family, friends and neighbors. The farm became her place of peaceful rest when she became too ill to battle her illness any longer.

Mary was born on July 26, 1956, the daughter of Laverne and Helen (Wagner) Cooper. She graduated from Mason County Central High School in 1974 and attended Mercy School of Nursing in Grand Rapids, and West Shore Community College. Mary was employed for many years as an orthodontist assistant for Dr. Fred McHugh, DDS, and later as a medical assistant in the offices of David Gadzinski, MD and Precision Medical Health of Ludington. On October 13, 1979 she married James L. Nichols at St. Simon Catholic Church in Ludington and they would have celebrated 45 years of marriage this year. Their committed bond extended to the family owned pharmacy - Nichols Drugstore of Scottville, which they co-owned until it was sold in 2012. In 2014 Mary began her dream career as the property manager and chef at the Flint Rainbow Club. Over the next ten years she enjoyed meeting her new “family”

of sport club members while preparing delectable meals at the historic club house on the Pere Marquette River in Baldwin. The garden harvests were once again shared, and she could also be a facilitator of improvements to the club house and extensive property bordering 3,000 feet of shoreline on the river.

“Sign up and Serve” was always Mary’s philosophy toward life, and she did this in abundance. The Scottville Harvest Festival Parade was co-chaired by Mary and Jim for 28 consecutive years, and in 2000 they were selected Scottville Citizens of the Year. She was a member of the Scottville Chamber of Commerce and served on the Michigan Main Street Development Committee. Mary was a Scottville Youth Recreation Soccer Coach for many years, and was the Advisor for the Mason County Youth Council of the Ludington Area Community Foundation from 1997 to 2000. Mary was a member of the planning, fund-raising, and construction committee for the Ludington Waterfront Park Playground in 1998-99, and remained an active member of St. Jerome/St. Mary’s Catholic Church, where she also participated in the church choirs. In 2005 the Nichols family hosted a Youth for Understanding exchange student from Japan whose July 2023 visit was unfortunately too late to meet his American host mother once again. Mary was elected Riverton Township Treasurer in 1984, and served the township for 24 years. In 2009 she was elected to the Mason County Board of Commissioners and served as the District 4 Commissioner for three terms, 2009-2014.

Mary’s love of family, friends and community became her purpose in life, and she fulfilled this calling by organizing whenever or wherever she saw an opportunity to nourish, support, defend, accommodate, or rehabilitate someone in need . . . or to celebrate a momentous event.

Mary will be greatly missed by her husband Jim and son Joshua Daniel Nichols (Samantha Yennior) and their children Ryah Ann and Khloe Kay of Scottville; her daughter in law Kaycee Nichols and children Avalon Rebecca, Zoe Adison, and Mason Allen Nichols of Lima, OH.; her siblings Lane (Rosemary) Cooper of Freeport, Sue (Peter) Siler of Lowell, Jeri (John) Claire,

Fred (Debbie) Cooper, and Leslie Ann Cooper all of Ludington; her extended Nichols family Christy (Mark) Buck and Steve Nichols of Pentwater; her step-sisters Pam (Charles) Nelson, Kay (Robert) Neal, and Jane (Paul) Lindemuth of Holland; and many very special loved nieces and nephews.

Mary was preceded in death by her son Gabriel James Nichols on November 15, 2021; her parents LaVerne and Helen Cooper; her sisters Ann Marie and Therese Cooper; her brother Duane Cooper; her father and mother-in-law Tom and Loretta Nichols; her brother-in-law John Nichols; her stepmother Phyllis Mulligan Cooper Petersen; and her niece Kimberly Ann Cooper; and her nephews Dustin Lane Cooper and David Cooper Claire.

The Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated for Mary on at 11:00 am on Friday, August 4th at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Custer with Rev. Dan DePew as Celebrant. Friends may visit with her family on Thursday evening, August 3rd from 6:00-8:00 pm at Wyman Funeral & Cremation Services in Scottville, and on Friday morning from 10:00 am until time of Mass at the church. Mary will be laid to rest alongside her son Gabriel at Pere Marquette Cemetery in Ludington.

Mary's wishes were that memorials be directed to the City of Ludington (memo: Waterfront playground) for financial sustaining of the Childrens Waterfront Park Playground, or to Caritas's Food Pantry at St. Mary's Church in Custer.

# Cemetery Details

## Pere Marquette Catholic Cemetery

5866 West Sixth Street  
Ludington, MI 49431

# Previous Events

## Visitation

AUG 3. 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Wyman Funeral & Cremation Services - Stephens Funeral Home  
305 E. State St.  
Scottville, MI 49454  
(231) 757-3333  
wyman-stephens@sbcglobal.net  
<https://www.wymanfuneralservice.com>

## Visitation

AUG 4. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

St. Mary's Catholic Church  
85 South Madison Street  
Custer, MI 49405

## Funeral Mass

AUG 4. 11:00 AM (ET)

St. Mary's Catholic Church  
85 South Madison Street  
Custer, MI 49405

# Tribute Wall

CH

“ Mary was one of the kindest and most loving women I have ever had the pleasure meet. Enjoy those heavenly gardens! We love you Lola ❤️ Charity, Zac, and Logan

Charity - November 06, 2023 at 08:49 AM

TH

“ I worked with Mary & Jim at the Flint Rainbow Club. I loved working with them. I just recently found out that she had passed away. I prayed for her hoping she would get better.

Tommy Hollifield - September 06, 2023 at 09:06 PM

LB

“ Although miles have separated us in the last years, Mary was a such a wonderful friend. I was new to the school and she made me feel like I was one of the crowd. She will be so missed by all that knew her.

Leah Goff Braun - July 09, 2023 at 03:32 PM



“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Mary L. Nichols.



July 09, 2023 at 03:27 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Mary L. Nichols.

July 09, 2023 at 03:27 PM



“ I'm exhausted; and all I did was read about Mary's life. It's like a novel; yet like a much too short-short story. The Cooper Family Farm on Hawley Road was always immaculate. To her husband Jim Nichols (whom I never missed a chance to say hi to-whenver we saw each other); and the Cooper and Nichols families we (Linda Jankowski & I) extend condolences.



**TERRY S. WILLIAMS** - July 01, 2023 at 11:20 AM



“ Condolences to the Cooper and Nichols family.  
Terri Green Stoyka

**Theresa Stoyka** - June 29, 2023 at 03:38 PM

BB

“ Jim, we are so sorry to hear of Mary's passing. Mary was always a beautiful Young Lady, with her loving smile and a heart as big as forever. I don't know of any Couple better suited of each other than you two. What an awesome life you created and shared with so many. May those beautiful memories bring comfort to you and your precious Family. I know many years have passed since seeing one another, but please know that our prayers, love, strength, and hugs are with you. A Beautiful Angel has reached Heaven and has received her crown. May God be with you, All.

*With our sympathy and love,  
Bob and Bev Budzynski*

---

**Beverly Budzynski** - June 29, 2023 at 11:34 AM

LL

“ I am so sorry to hear of Mary's passing. She was so much fun in high school and was always laughing. I'd see her occasionally out and about when I would come home and I'll miss those times. My thoughts and prayers go out to her family for peace and comfort.



---

**Linda (Gorig) Lawson** - June 23, 2023 at 06:22 PM

PC

“ We are deeply saddened to hear of Mary's passing. Mary was a motivator and had a wonderful ability to bring people together. She was a great family and community leader. We will always remember the terrific meals she would. prepare, down to the final detectible details. Mary is in our hearts forever.

*Paul & Linda Cooper*

---

**Paul L Cooper** - June 23, 2023 at 07:48 AM