



## Rose Ann Rudnicki

December 26, 1915 - September 10, 2009

With a tender heart and nurturing touch, Rose Rudnicki viewed caring for her family as both her greatest calling and favorite blessing. She was a virtuous woman in many ways and her selflessness was intertwined throughout her thoughts, words, and deeds, instinctively putting others ahead of herself. She had a rather adventurous spirit and gamely tried new things whether it involved creations in the kitchen or participating in activities of many kinds. Extraordinarily beautiful inside and out, Rose leaves behind valuable lessons in character and love, laced with touches of grace that will live on in the hearts of her beloved family and friends. During a year in which the first taxicab ride was taken, transcontinental telephone service was inaugurated, and the average American worker earned \$750 annually, Anthony and Mary (Motyka) Marek, of Kansas City, Missouri, were pleased to announce the birth of their first child, Rose Ann, on December 26, 1915. Rose's father worked in a meat packing plant, but moved his family to Ludington, Michigan, when Rose was two years old due to health issues. He then began farming, as well as founding Marek Auto Parts on Dennis Road – a company that still exists today. As the oldest of five children, Rose often helped care for her siblings, her nurturing spirit evident even then. Still a young girl when her mother became ill, Rose not only cared for her mother, she took on many of the household duties including the cooking and cleaning. Even with her added responsibilities, Rose attended Lincoln Valley School where she was well-liked and had many friends. By the end of 1929, the Great Depression had become

a defining presence in the lives of many American families. When she was just 16, Rose moved to Chicago to work as a housekeeper as a way to earn some income. However, her strong attachment to her family called her home after a short time. Back at home, she worked as an inspector at the Wyneberg Shoe Factory, and did a great share of the work picking strawberries that her family grew to sell, part of doing what she could to help her family. Life took an exciting new direction for Rose when she attended a dance sponsored by the Polish National Alliance Insurance Company, held as a way to bring children of Polish heritage together to meet and socialize. While there, Rose met a dashing young man named Stanley Rudnicki, who would forever hold the key to her heart. Their sweet romance blossomed into true love and they were married on October 28, 1939, at St. Jerome's Catholic Church in Scottville. Stanley owned a dairy farm on the north side of Hackert Lake and they made their home together there. No stranger to hard work, Rose helped on the farm doing everything from milking the cows to driving the tractor. The young couple was thrilled with joy beyond measure when they became the parents of two wonderful daughters, Phyllis and Marie, who quickly became the center of their lives. Rose completely embraced her role as a mother, always making sure that her daughters were her main priority. Although she herself didn't care to swim, the lake was enticing to the girls and she made time in her schedule whenever they wanted to go swimming. Rose carefully watched them at the water's edge, and was gracious to stay for as long as the girls wanted, just one display of her selfless example to her family. Family ties were always of the greatest importance to Rose, and their family was best friends with the Ruby family all throughout her life. The families cherished their close ties and they enjoyed many wonderful times together including picking dewberries that grew on the Rudnicki farm. Sunday afternoons were spent with the Ruby's, joined by Rose's family the Marek's, Marrison's, and Martz families, enjoying hours together and picnics down by the lake. Stanley made a lake path roadway to transport visitors on the hay wagon pulled by the tractor. The sisters gathered each week to plan and discuss the weekend's

menu with great care and attention. In so many ways, Rose was a rare gem who brought light and grace to the world around her. She was always a proper lady, dressing with great care and making sure her clothes were ironed, even for work. She had a comforting depth of character – her manners, speech, housework, and roles as a wife and mother were always laced with graciousness. She was a great cook, famous for her pirogues and pies of all kinds, but the family favorites were the pies made from dewberries picked on the farm, or the hand-picked lemons from daughter Marie's tree out in California. Stanley loved to fish, and Rose always cooked whatever he caught. Her homemaking included lots of canning, storing up good things to have ready for winter meals. As the years passed, life came with many changes as it often does. Due to Stanley's health and Rose's allergies, they retired from working the farm in 1966. However, Rose spent every spring at Nickelson's Tree Farm, counting inventory. She was a dependable worker who always made sure to be available when the time came to count the trees. When her daughters left home and established families of their own, Rose kept the family ties strong and secure. She continued to be a role model for her daughters in many ways – as a wife, mother, grandmother, daughter, and friend. Her grandchildren brought her tremendous joy and she made sure each one knew they had their own special irreplaceable importance in her life. Rose and Stanley traveled to California every winter to spend time with Marie and her family and at times traveled to Texas to be with their friends. Rose was deeply saddened when her beloved Stanley died in July of 2007, keenly feeling the loss of his companionship and partnership. Rose Rudnicki was a nurturing woman whose heart beat to love others. Her home was always a haven when her children or grandchildren came for a visit. They were always met by the sweet smells of something cooking on the stove or baking in the oven, but the best part of Rose's greeting was the unconditional love and overwhelming sense of security given to those who graced her doorstep. Rose Ann Rudnicki died at her home on September 10, 2009. She will be greatly

missed by her daughters Phyllis Harbin of Scottville, and Marie (Michael) McCarthy of Long Beach, CA; grandchildren, Michelle Thompson of Holly, MI, Kathleen, Andrea, and Matthew McCarthy all of Long Beach, CA and Margaret (Deric) Clarke of Fullerton, CA; great-grandchildren Devin Thompson and Regan Clarke; sisters Sophie Ruby and Josephine (Charles) Martz all of Ludington; sister-in-law Margie Marek of Ludington; brother-in-law Don (Luella) Marrison also of Ludington; and many nieces and nephews. In addition to her husband Stanley, Rose was preceded in death by her parents, brother Henry Marek, and sister Anna Marrison. The Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 11:00 a.m. on Tuesday, September 15 at St. Jerome's Catholic Church in Scottville, with Rev. Mike Cilibraise as celebrant. Burial will take place at Pere Marquette Cemetery in Ludington. Visitation with Rose's family and friends will be held on Monday evening from 6-8 p.m. at Stephens Funeral Home in Scottville. Memorial contributions may be made to St. Jerome's Catholic Church, the Women's Imaging Center at Memorial Medical Center or the St. Jerome's Food Panty.