



Verna (Ashley) DeKay

October 24, 2010

Verna Ann (Ashley) DeKay passed away peacefully in the presence of family on Sunday afternoon. Verna was born on September 22, 1926 in Ogdensburg, New York. She was the daughter of Raymond Ashley and Dorothy (Gulliver) Ashley. She resided in Ogdensburg and married Clifford DeKay in September of 1950. She and Cliff had one child, Michelle (DeKay) Yeger. They resided in Canton, New York while Cliff attended St. Lawrence University. The family then resided in several communities in upstate New York and also in Geneva, Illinois, finally making Bloomington their home in 1971, so Cliff could pursue a career as a research engineer for Sarkes Tarzain Corp.

Verna found a new calling after moving to Bloomington and took on the monumental task of organizing and presenting an annual holiday bazaar at Central State Hospital. At this event patients were able to choose free gifts for themselves and loved ones each holiday season. This organization ran on her hard work and public donations alone and was a truly a labor of love. She received much media attention and also several awards for her humanitarian efforts.

Verna never met a stranger and many people she knew felt she was the angel brought to them in their time of crisis or need. Verna was a member of St. Charles Catholic Church and later the St. John's the Apostle Catholic Church, both in Bloomington. She lovingly cared for her husband Cliff during his longtime battle with multiple sclerosis until the time of his passing in 1999.

She was preceded in death by her parents, her brother Raymond, her sister Marie and her husband, Cliff. She is survived by her older sister, Marcella Downey Weil of Syracuse, NY, her daughter, Michelle S. Yeger of Bloomington, two granddaughters; Dawn Marie Shea-Paganelli (Tony Paganelli) of Indianapolis and Paige Nicole Hall of Bloomington, her great grandchildren, John Clifford Paganelli and Brooke Elissa Shea Paganelli, her niece, Renee Downey Hart of Syracuse, New York and her nephew, Robert Downey of Ogdensburg.

Mass of Christian Burial will be 10:00 a.m. Thursday at St. Charles Catholic Church with Father William Stumpf officiating. Burial will be at Clear Creek Cemetery. Friends may call at Allen Funeral Home, 4155 S. Old St. Rd. 37 on Wednesday from 5:00-8:00 p.m.

Memorial contributions may be made to the family in care of Allen Funeral Home. There will be a gathering of friends and family following the burial services around noon on Thursday with the location to be announced. Online condolences may be sent to the family at www.allenfuneralhome.org.

Tribute Wall

AV

“ Dear Michelle, Dawn and Family,

My sincerest condolences to you all; Verna was a beautiful person and we were blessed to have her in our lives.

My thoughts and prayers are with you and your family.

Avery (Canada) Augustine

Avery Augustine - March 22, 2013 at 08:19 AM

ER

“ Michelle, Dawn, and Paige,

I am deeply sorry to hear of the loss of your mom/grandmother. May you all be surrounded with love and peace at this most difficult time.

Erin Werner

Erin Werner - March 22, 2013 at 08:19 AM

AN

“ Michelle,

Just wanted to say I'm thinking of you, Dawn, and Paige. I'm sure this is a difficult time. Keeping you in my prayers- Ang

Angie Chalfant - March 22, 2013 at 08:19 AM

LI

“ I would like to offer my condolences to the family on Verna's passing. I remember Verna as one of the sweetest and most loving women I've known. She was a source of strength and friend to both my father Danny and my Grandmother Florence, both of whom have passed, during their past times of need. Unfortunately my work schedule prevents me from offering my condolences in person, in particular to Verna's granddaughter Dawn who was a childhood friend of mine. My thoughts are with you all.

Love, Liza

Liza Pavelich - March 22, 2013 at 08:19 AM