

Irene Vanyo



Having led a full and rich life with the love of her large family and many friends, Irene passed away peacefully at the age of 89.

Irene was born in Taber, Alberta, the first-born daughter of Polish immigrant farmers. Industrious and resourceful, they toiled long, hot days harvesting sugar beets with the infant Irene beside them in an apple box.

In 1931, the family moved to Coleman, Alberta where Irene's father found work as a coal miner. When Irene began school, she quickly learned English and discovered her love of learning. She enjoyed reading and happily used her allowance to purchase books.

The family settled in Calgary, Alberta in 1944. During her high school years, Irene aspired to become a nurse, but her focus changed in the winter of 1949 when she met the love of her life, Jim. Romance ensued, followed by a loving marriage of 61 years.

In 1953, Irene and Jim moved to Vancouver Island and eventually settled in Victoria, BC to raise their children. Irene and Jim's home became a favourite meeting place for family, where Irene hosted countless family events and always made room at the table for another chair.

Irene was an exemplary parent. She was non-judgemental, loved her children unconditionally, and was a role model of kindness and compassion. Each family member knew they were special in her eyes. Irene also had a remarkable talent for making

friends. She was a good listener and cared deeply about others. Many saw Irene as a role model for aging well. When Jim passed away in 2011, Irene was grateful for the good friends she'd made over the years and seldom turned down an invitation for an outing.

"A rare, special person, Irene will be missed by the many who knew and loved her"

Irene was predeceased by her loving parents, Joseph and Jenny Samczyk, and her siblings Edward Samczyk and Connie Boyd. She is survived by her children Barbara Botten (Robert), Debbie Sawin (Gary, deceased), Shelley Forrester (Barry), Jamey Vanyo (Lynne) and Kathy Saunders. Irene also leaves her grandchildren Renita, Cherise, Amelia, Matt, Nick, Shannon, Jeremy, Nathan, Rob, Brenda, Janet, and Steven; great-grandchildren Willow, Shyla, Ashly, Alice, Remy, Odessa and Ryker; and numerous cousins, nieces, in-laws, and friends.

A Funeral Mass will be held at St. Joseph the Worker Parish on Friday, August 23, 2019 at 11:00 a.m. with Fr. Alfredo Monacelli presiding. A reception will follow in the Church hall.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Victoria Hospice, 4th Floor, Richmond Pavilion, 1952 Bay Street, Victoria, BC, V8R 1J8.

Condolences may be offered to the family below.

McCall Gardens

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