



Dolores H. Rawlings

October 6, 1940 - June 17, 2013

Dolores Rawlings was born on October 6th, 1940, the daughter of Elnora Bridges and Joe Dixon in Chicago Illinois, Dolores Helen Dixon attended Providence High School on Chicago's Southside. Her father, with his roots in Atlanta, died when Dolores was only ten years old. She learned the importance and the value of hard work through her mother, who kept the bills paid with the wages she earned working at Sunbeam. In 1960, she married William Thomas and had the first of two sons, William Thomas Jr. Eight years later, now living in Marcellus, Michigan she remarried and gave birth to her second son James Rawlings. She relocated to Three Rivers, MI and entered nursing school. During her studies, Dolores made the honor roll and later earned her degree as a Licensed Practical Nurse from Glenn Oaks Community College. In 1974 Dolores relocated her family to Kalamazoo, MI to start her career at Borgess Hospital. Praised for her ability to assess patient needs and for the effectiveness in which she communicated with patients and staff alike, in 1981 Dolores Rawlings was named the "Borgess Hospital Employee of the Year". Working tirelessly from 11 pm to 7am for days on end, she continued to lead by example, by earning her R.N., Masters Degrees, and if not for illness...would have completed her doctorate degree in Administrative Medicine. Already a cancer survivor, Dolores was diagnosed, fought and continued to win her fight against breast cancer, nearly twenty years in remission at the time of her passing. Through her own battles with cancer, Dolores became an advocate for breast cancer research and

awareness. She teamed up with the Susan G. Komen Foundation and other groups, organizing fund raisers, giving seminars and attending national conferences to further enhance her understanding of current treatments and the benefits of screenings and early detection. Suggesting and helping to implement changes to decrease the wait time for woman waiting for test results after examinations earned her recognition and a promotion to Women's Health Coordinator of Radiology at Borgess Medical Center.

As a young, black woman, on the south side of Chicago during the 50's and 60's, Dolores facing discrimination and race riots, participated in peaceful walks of protest with Dr. Martin Luther King. In Michigan, she became one of the founding members of the Michigan Black Nurses Association and co-chaired the health committee for the Metropolitan Kalamazoo Branch of the N.A.A.C.P. She continued her community service in Kalamazoo, but kept up with her hometown of Chicago through her weekly pilgrimage to the Michigan News Agency every Sunday to pick up the Tribune and the Chicago Sun Times. Her intelligence shined through her work at the State Hospital, the Family Health Care Center and most recently with Kalamazoo County Health and Community Services, working with pregnant teens.

She served on dozens of boards, committees and various organizations but the affiliation she was most proud to be a part of was the Saturday Eve's Book Club, the longest running book club in the area. Although favorite authors like Clancy, McMillan, Gresham, Angelu and J.K Rowling took her imagination all over the universe, Dolores did manage to see in person Hawaii, Rome, France, England (twice) Ireland and Jamaica. Her passion for reading was remarkable, often starting and finishing entire books overnight, sometimes completing two to three books in a single week.

Borgess bus trips to see her Bears and Cubs, or to Vegas to the casino or just Christmas shopping back home in Chicago. She loved quilting with her friends and hanging out with the girls at the Mane Attraction Hair Salon. True to form,

Dolores found the down time in the salon as an opportunity to coordinate with the owner to offer blood pressure screenings for the clients while they waited. Dolores's commitment to the health of our community will be missed, but the impact felt by her many years of service will continue through the countless students and young adults she mentored, and the loving memories cherished by her family and friends.

Dolores Rawlings is survived by sons William and James; her granddaughter Gabriella; grandsons, Dmitri and William; daughter-in-law Jeanne, and her dog Emma.

Previous Events

Service

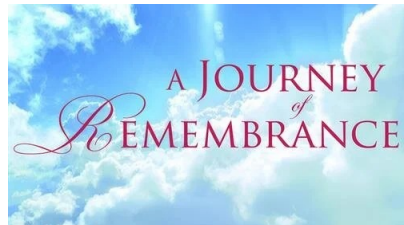
JUN **22**. 3:00 PM (ET)

The Galilee Baptist Church
1216 North Westnedge Avenue
Kalamazoo, MI 49007

Tribute Wall



“ Harper Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Dolores H. Rawlings



Harper Funeral Home - June 17, 2013 at 12:00 AM



“ Dolores H. Rawlings

October 23, 2023 at 06:06 AM



“ Dolores H. Rawlings

October 06, 2023 at 10:42 AM



“ Dolores was a wonderful person, and will be missed by our family very much. She helped my daughter and grandchildren in so many ways, Miss Emma and Dolores were more like family than some of my own. I will miss watching Emma and seeing Dolores smile and hearing her giggles when she came to pick her up.
We were blessed to have such a friend
Rose Prather and family



Rose Prather - July 02, 2013 at 06:09 PM

MP

“ I am Karen Ford sis- Kristen Ford Daly's aunt. I remember Dolores as a bubbly caring mom and nurse and a great friend. Her smile was genuine and loving . Rest in peace, Dolores you ran the race, fought the good fight and leave a giving legacy for all of us! Blessings to your family :)
Mary Kay Potyraj

Mary Kay Potyraj - June 22, 2013 at 08:09 AM

RR

“ Dearest family of Dolores:
I just learned of her passing a few minutes ago and am so saddened. She was truly a champion and advocate of those with breast cancer and she also worked tirelessly to eradicate this disease.

My sister-in-law, who is a breast cancer survivor, met Dolores during her (my sister-in-law's) ordeal w/breast cancer. Dolores was a wealth of knowledge for her, giving her books to read and encouragement. After my sister-in-law's treatment ended and she was cancer-free, she and my brother discovered that they were pregnant---with TRIPLETS! Dolores made them 3 beautiful quilts to commemorate the occasion. Though the triplets are now 5, and heading to kindergarten inthe fall, the family cherishes those quilts to this day!

Thanks for sharing your mom and grandma with this community. She will be greatly missed by all.

Robyn Robinson

Robyn Robinson - June 21, 2013 at 10:48 PM



“ *Healing thoughts and prayers go out to you, Jimmy, and the rest of your family. I have fond memories of your Mom, I often think back to when she helped us in the classroom.*

Mindee Seeger - June 21, 2013 at 09:39 PM


Edward
Hurst Jr

“ *My thoughts and prayers are with you Jimmy. I remember her as always helping in our classroom whether it was 5, 6, 7, or 8th. God Bless.*



Edward Hurst Jr - June 21, 2013 at 07:13 PM

RC

“ *Smiling, with a chuckle in her voice, thinking up new ways to approach a problem is what I think of when Dolores' name is mentioned. I appreciated her friendship which began at St Joe School when our children were in 5th grade. I respected her skills and knowledge as a fellow neuro nurse. She touched so many lives with her caring and initiative.*

Rosemary Pearson Candelario

Rosemary Pearson Candelario - June 21, 2013 at 02:03 PM

SI

“ Superior Imaging/Printmill sends it's condolences to your family for the passed of Dolores. She will always be remembered as a valued customer of ours and we will miss her great knowledge of the medical field, especially breast cancer research. Dolores never hesitated to share that knowledge when she felt that someone needed advise.

Bob and Diane Fletter

Superior Imaging/Printmill - June 21, 2013 at 01:48 PM

KD

“ Jimmy,
I am so sorry to hear about your Mom, she was one of the best. Always involved and always loving. When I think back to our St. Joe days your Mom is a constant loving and forceful presence. Please know I am keeping you in my thought and prayers.

Kristen Ford Daly - June 21, 2013 at 08:55 AM