



## Kathryn Bernards

March 9, 1948 - October 22, 2024

Kathryn (Alexa) Bernards, 76, of Crystal Falls, MI, passed away October 22, 2024, at St. Mary Hospital in Green Bay, WI.

Kathy was born March 9, 1948, in Chicago, IL, daughter of the late Mike J. and Mary (Surinak) Alexa. After graduating from Providence High School in Chicago, IL, in 1966, she spent the next year at the University of Illinois in Chicago and then another year at the Chicago Institute of Technology, studying to be a lab tech. From 1968-1985 Kathy worked at Grant Hospital and in several doctors' offices as a lab tech.

On April 16, 1977, she married David S. Bernards; he preceded her in death in 2018.

As a young woman in the 60s Kathy started a folk singing group to perform at a friend's wedding ceremony. This group, The Shalomi Raisins, went on to sing at many other weddings for friends and relatives. She also played her guitar and sang at several coffee houses in the Chicago area. She was an avid fan of folk music and later of country music.

When she grew tired of the medical profession she attended Northeastern Illinois University, taking some accounting classes. She worked for several Chicago companies, including Salerno Cookie Company, Riverside

Publishing, and Wells Gardner Electronics in their accounting departments.

Kathy and David moved to Crystal Falls, MI, in 2013 upon her retirement. Since her parents were born in Crystal Falls and Amasa respectively, she had been coming here all her life. When the opportunity to finally move here arose, they took it.

She was an avid reader, both of books and her various electronic devices. She loved listening to books on tape during long car trips. She enjoyed fishing, watching movies, and she took many painting classes offered by the Crystal Falls Contemporary Center. She volunteered at the Iron County Medical Care Facility, visiting with residents and assisting with bingo. She looked forward to trying new restaurants whenever possible, and she loved the fact that she was finally a Yooper!!

Kathy is survived by her brother and sister-in-law, Mickey and Pat Alexa; nephews, Michael Alexa, Dan Polonsky, and Jonny Polonsky; nieces, Michelene Alexa and Danielle Alexa; a great nephew, Frankie Polonsky; a great niece, Talullah Polonsky; and her very special cousins, Dean, Jill, Derek and Alli, Zach and Jackie, Megan Aberly, and Lauren Aberly.

Visitation will be held from 10:00 am - 11:00 am on Monday, October 28th at the Nash Funeral Home in Crystal Falls with an 11:00 am service to follow at the funeral home. Pastor Vicky Prewitt will officiate. Burial will be in Evergreen Memorial Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, Kathy requests that donations be made to the following in her name:

Providence St. Mel  
119 South Central Park Avenue

Chicago, IL 60624  
www.psm.k12.il.us  
for Kathryn Alexa Bernards, Class of 1966

United Service Organizations (USO)  
P.O. Box 1831  
Merrifield, VA 22116  
www.uso.org

Condolences to the family of Kathryn (Alexa) Bernards may be expressed online at [www.nashfuneralhome.net](http://www.nashfuneralhome.net)

The family has entrusted the Nash Funeral Home & Cremation Services of Crystal Falls with the arrangements.

# Cemetery Details

## Evergreen Memorial Cemetery

311 Logan St.  
Crystal Falls, MI 49920

# Previous Events

## Visitation

OCT 28. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Nash Funeral Home  
104 North Third St.  
Crystal Falls, MI 49920

## Funeral Service

OCT 28. 11:00 AM (CT)

Nash Funeral Home  
104 North Third St.  
Crystal Falls, MI 49920

# Tribute Wall

KM

“ I met Kathy when she worked at Wells Gardner. I always enjoyed hearing about her trips to the UP and how she was looking forward to retiring there. I am so grateful that her and David had that opportunity. She enjoyed being around family (she said she was related to everyone in Crystal Falls.)

I enjoyed my visits to the UP and her as a tour guide showing me all her favorite places. I got to have dinner at her cousins house, who she cherished, and take a painting class with her. I'll miss our long conversations on the phone and when I travelled, she was my check in person each night before I retired.

She will be missed by her many friends, including her Grief Group, which she enjoyed meeting with and sharing stories. Thank you Vicky. She had such high praises for all your help and understanding.

Kathy Murphy

---

Kathy Murphy - November 02, 2024 at 06:53 PM

LI

“ I am so sorry to hear about Kathy. I was fortunate to meet her at our Weight Watchers meeting on Saturday mornings in Chicago. She always brought her smile, her joy for life and her generous spirit with her and shared with all of us. Since I am a native Michigander I was always interested in hearing about her and David's retirement plans in Crystal Falls. I knew I was going to miss her but how could I begrudge her when I saw how excited she was to begin their new chapter "up north?" My sincere condolences to her family.

---

Lisa - October 27, 2024 at 04:30 PM

DC

“ *Dan and Jonny Polonsky (nephews) Chicago purchased the Enchanted Cottage for the family of Kathryn Bernards.*



---

**Dan and Jonny Polonsky (nephews) Chicago** - October 27, 2024 at 01:06 PM

GS

“ *Kathy (and David) we're kind to me from my earliest memories of them when I was four or five years old and they visited my mom Diana Bellus-Petterec, who was, in turn, a childhood friend of Kathy's. Although I did not see them for decades, as I went about growing up, I will never forget meeting Kathy again in 2005 when I was about to visit family in Slovakia. After we reconnected via Kathy's High school and life-long friend, Marilyn (Baccino) Gilley, Kathy picked right up being her kind and generous self. In fact, when she and David moved to Michigan, she gifted me a beautiful lamp that had been my grandmother's. We kept in touch from time to time, and I was always happy to hear that she was where she wanted to be, near family and friends in the UP after David passed. Kathy was caring, sensitive, intelligent, and a gifted writer. I will always remember her kindness and generosity.*

---

**Geri Smith** - October 26, 2024 at 06:05 PM

JB

“ Though we grew up in the same neighborhood, attended St. Mark elementary and Providence High School, because she was a year older than I, we didn’t get to know each other well until Kathy started the Shalomi Raisins in 1968. Even in those days, Kathy’s fierce devotion to the people and things she loved was obvious: her mom, her guitar named Liza, and her light colored 1965 Ford that she festooned with a huge peace symbol on the trunk made of floral decorated contact paper – AND, of course, singing folk music at friends’ weddings with the Raisins!

*Since most of the weddings we accompanied were friends of one of ours, payment might have been enough to cover the gas it took to get to the venue and an invitation to the reception. That was the best part! We loved to party, singing our hearts out, then eating and dancing, high on the joy of yet another happy wedding day.*

*Once most of our friends and the Raisins were married, life took us in different directions. We’d occasionally gather to celebrate a milestone, but phone calls and quick conversations at the funerals of each parent kept us connected. Through all these years Kathy was constant: her fierce love accompanied by much laughter never flagged.*

*When David died, I thought Kathy’s heart would break. She channeled her love into the grief group that met weekly in Crystal Falls. She was so proud of that group! Her voice had a special energy when she talked about their meetings.*

*About this time, Kathy and I got in the habit of a weekly phone call. Often she’d keep me company while I walked home from Pilates class. She’d talk about the recent “big excitement” in Crystal Falls, who she’d had lunch with, what friend she was worried about. She always asked about each of my family members by name – even the dog, Cal.*

*I missed talking to Kathy when I walked home from Pilates this*

*week. I took solace in memories of her love for family and those she welcomed into her life. And, of course, the UP!!*



---

**Joanie Bieler** - October 26, 2024 at 09:21 AM

BB

*Kathy and I met at a weight watchers meeting many years ago. We became fast friends and always say together. Even after WW meetings ended, and even after she moved, we kept in touch. I will miss my friend, she always has words of wisdom. May her memory be a blessing.*

---

**Bonnie Bbraverman** - October 26, 2024 at 03:58 PM

RG

“ *Saddened to hear about the loss of our good friend Kathy. My wife Marilyn (Baccino) Gilley was one of Kathy's closest friends. They met at Providence HS through their mutual love for singing. Their friendship lasted until Marilyn's passing in 2017. Additionally Kathy was like a Godmother to my daughter Gina. We lost Gina in 2005. Kathy was always very supportive for me over the last seven years, She never failed to call me on those bad days when memories fill your thoughts. I only hope I was as good a friend to her after she lost David.*

*After Kathy and David moved to Michigan she and Marilyn would talk for hours on the phone. They will be together now to reminisce about all those years of friendship.*

---

**Randy Gilley** - October 24, 2024 at 11:17 PM

DB

“ Kathy's parents and my parents were best friends and all had Slovak heritage. We played together at my family cottage many Labor Day week-ends as children. We kept in touch as adults. We saw each other in person when we met for lunch in Chicago, for the last time, just before she moved to Michigan with David. We always talked about the good old days. I'm glad she had family ties for her golden years. Rest in peace Kathy.  
Diana Bellus-Petterec

---

**Diana Bellus-Petterec** - October 24, 2024 at 10:08 PM

J(

“ So sorry for your loss...many happy memories of the times our families spent together in Lake Como, Wisconsin. Your dad helping my dad build the garage there, the times we shared by the fire pit... the fried chicken ..the water, your mom baby my sister and me, A long time ago, but it feels like yesterday. Try to stay in touch... Love,  
Dolly (Bellus) Ernst  
7341 Jonquil Terrace, Hanover Park, Il. 60133-3345. 1-(630)- 204-4563

---

**Jeanette E Ernst (Dolly)** - October 24, 2024 at 09:56 PM