



## Nichola Susan Frey

December 21, 1942 - January 25, 2024

\*\*\*\*\*UPDATE: Funeral Mass will be celebrated 10:00 a.m. Wednesday, Jan. 31st, at the WEST campus of St. John Paul II Parish in Kankakee. \*\*\*\*\*

Nichola Susan (Nicky) Frey, 81, of Kankakee, passed away Thursday, Jan 25th, 2024, at Riverside Miller Healthcare.

Nicky was born on Dec. 21st, 1942, in Cape Girardeau, MO., the daughter of Winston and Hazel McSwain. Her family moved to Poplar Bluff, MO., in 1957, and a short time later, she met her future husband, Richard (Dick) Frey. They married on Dec. 27th, 1961, at Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Poplar Bluff, and they recently celebrated their 62nd wedding anniversary.

The young couple moved to Kankakee in 1969, and Nicky's early years in a new hometown were spent raising their sons. There were four upon arrival, and two more arrived in the succeeding years. Of all her many activities and accomplishments, Nicky always made clear she was most proud of her role as an attentive, loving mother and spouse.

As the children grew, Nicky, a graduate of Poplar Bluff High School, returned to the classroom. She earned degrees from Kankakee Community College and Governors State University. She became the director of the KCC Respiratory Therapy Program, a program jointly operated by KCC and Riverside Medical Center. She worked with the program from 1978 until 2004

and was very popular with her students. Nicky did groundbreaking work in the respiratory therapy field, as she developed accreditation standards which became the model to follow through the United States and earned her national recognition.

Her prowess for both learning and teaching respiratory therapy earned her distinction as a "Who's Who Among Students in American Colleges & Universities" and as a "Who's Who Among America's Teachers."

Nicky was a member of St. Teresa Parish and later St. John Paul II Parish, both of Kankakee. She devoted countless hours to church causes, a prime example being the work she did as a volunteer for the parish food pantry and free medical clinic. Her sons attended the parish schools. She also spent much time volunteering for school-related functions. In 2015, Nicky and her husband received the Spirit Award for their Contributions to St. Teresa.

Nicky was also a committed volunteer for the Kankakee Jaycees Little League, where all her boys' played baseball and her husband volunteered too. She was the league treasurer and secretary for numerous years and was also well known for preparing and donating her famous Italian beef for sale at the concession stand during the league's annual Fourth of July festivities.

Nicky is survived by her husband. Their devotion toward each other was something to behold. They played many rounds of golf together at Oak Springs Golf Club, their second home during the summer. They traveled extensively to national and international destinations. The latter years allowed plenty of time for the couple to enjoy their grandchildren's company. During the final phase of Nicky's life, Dick was consistently at her side providing comfort.

Also surviving are sons Richard "Mike" Frey, (Cindy Gordon) of Limestone, IL; Johnathan Frey, (Donna Herron) of Canton, IL; Charles Frey, (Patricia Lowery) of Kankakee, IL; William Frey, (Leah Vick), of Aroma Park, IL; Daniel Frey (Kelly Glenn) of Rileyville, VA., and Edward Frey of Fort Myers, FL.

Also surviving are one sister Becky Gurley of Eureka, MO., one brother and sister-in-law, William and Mary McSwain of Webster Grove, MO., sister-in-law

Jan and Donald White of St. Peterburg, FL., brother-in-law Robert and Judy Frey of Jacksonville, FL.

Nicky is also survived by her grandchildren: Angela Mather, Robert Frey, Jack Frey, David Frey, Matthew Frey, Benjamin Frey, Nathan Frey, Tyler Fallings, Christopher Trobaugh, Nicholas Frey, Jacob Frey, Wilson Senesac, Jacob Senesac, Daniel Frey, Casimer Frey, and Joseph Frey. She is also survived by six great grandchildren and numerous nieces and nephews.

Preceding her in death were her parents; one sister, Priscilla "Jake" McSwain, one brother, Robert McSwain; infant son Robert Frey, and daughter-in-law Jossette Frey.

Visitation will be held from 4-8 p.m., Tuesday, Jan. 30th, at Clancy-Gernon-Hertz Funeral Home in Kankakee.

UPDATE: A funeral Mass will be celebrated by the Rev. Matt Pratscher at 10 a.m. Wednesday, Jan. 31st, at the WEST campus of St. John Paul II Parish in Kankakee.

Memorials can be made to the KCC Foundation, St. John Paul II Parish, and Uplifted Care.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

JAN **30**. 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Kankakee - Clancy-Gernon-Hertz Funeral Home  
1480 W. Court St.  
Kankakee, IL 60901  
(815) 932-1214  
cgfuneral@gmail.com

## Funeral Mass

JAN **31**. 10:00 AM (CT)

St. John Paul II - West Campus  
953 South 9th Avenue  
Kankakee, IL 60901

# Tribute Wall

LY

“ Dick I'm so sorry for the loss of Nicky. You are in my thoughts and prayers.

Lyn - January 31, 2024 at 02:32 PM

CG

“ Dick, Mike and Families >

So so sorry to hear of Nicky's passing. My heart too hurts for all of you. Prayers to all of you. Cherish the wonderful memories !

Carl Gerdovich



Carl Gerdovich - January 31, 2024 at 01:16 PM

BD

“ I was also, one of Nicky's Respiratory therapy students in the 80's, and then a fellow coworker at Riverside. She was always an inspiration of the therapist I wanted to become. Always enjoyed seeing her, and reminiscing about the old days...my thoughts and prayers are with the Frey Family, fly high, Nicky... ❤️🙏

Barbara Dams - January 30, 2024 at 08:16 PM

MJ

“ I spent the night at the Frey household often as a youth. Never a dull moment!! Mrs. Frey would always be so calm and peaceful. I only have a 5 yr old and I have no idea how she maintained that demeanor. I love the Frey family so much!

moonstone jackson - January 30, 2024 at 03:42 PM

MF

“ I was one of Nicky's Respiratory Students in the 80s. And oh my goodness...what an Inspiration she was to me. We often talked about being a Mother of boys. I had 3. A Great Teacher in and out of the classroom. My Prayers of Peace and Comfort to the Family. Marie Ford



Marie D Ford - January 30, 2024 at 03:16 PM

TR

“ Nickey was a beautiful person. Her pride and joy was her boys. She spoke of them when I was in the respiratory program. She was a great instructor @ KCC



Terry RobicheauxLloyd - January 30, 2024 at 02:52 PM

DB

“ Worked with Nikki and her husband Dick for many many years at KCC. She was a beautiful woman with a kind heart. She will be missed. Thinking of you Dick as you go thru this sad time.

Debbie Jain Cooke & Bryce - January 30, 2024 at 12:14 PM

AF

“ One of the best teachers I had the privilege of being instructed by! Nicky was stern but kind, often sharing her family stories in the classroom. She kept students on their toes all while injecting her humorous nature during our studies. Big hugs to her family Fly high Nicky!

angela fry - January 30, 2024 at 09:32 AM

RM

“ God has gained a fierce Warrior angel by His side, and she will be missed by. Our community. Our condolences to the family. Rest in peace Nicky.

Rose Devine Mitchell - January 29, 2024 at 10:40 PM

CH

“ My sincerest sympathy to Dick and family. Nicky was such a special person and I always enjoyed the times she was able to join us in the staff dining room for lunch at KCC. Her sense of humor was contagious and she was so fun to be around! Prayers for all of you. ❤️. Cindy Hebert

Cindy Hebert - January 29, 2024 at 10:11 PM

MZ

“ Dan, Kelly and Family,  
Sorry for your loss, you and your family are in my thoughts and prayers.



MaDonna and Brian Zasada, Sr. - January 29, 2024 at 08:06 PM

BM

“ Nicky was a beautiful beautiful person. I want to share my most heartfelt condolences to Dick and to the entire family. I am saddened that I am unable to attend the services.

Bruce Myers - January 29, 2024 at 06:43 PM

AR

“ *All you friends from Old Republic purchased the Caring Condolences Gift Basket for the family of Nichola Susan Frey.*



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**All you friends from Old Republic** - January 29, 2024 at 05:21 PM