



## Oleene Francine Bieber

November 3, 1923 - January 9, 2025

Oleene Francine Bieber, 101, of Kankakee, Illinois, passed away on January 9, 2025. She was born in the Letourneau Home in Bourbonnais, Illinois, on November 3, 1923, the daughter of Eugene and Mariette (nee Grandpre) Courville. As a young child, Oleene's family moved to a farm near St. George, Illinois, and it was on the farm that she spent the rest of her childhood and young adult life. Her teenage years found she and her brother, Richard, performing as a musical duo (Oleene on ukelele, Richard on guitar) and as members of various ensembles. Winning a local talent show, Oleene and Richard were invited to perform on WLS Radio's National Barn Dance program (a precursor to the The Grand Ole Opry), a highlight of their adolescence.

During World War II, Oleene was employed at the Kankakee Ordnance Works of the then Joliet Arsenal where TNT was manufactured for the war effort. She subsequently worked as a receptionist at St. Mary's Hospital. After WWII, Oleene met Fred Bieber, her sweetheart and the love of her life, at a dance at the Kankakee Armory; the two were married on May 29, 1948 and soon after moved to St. Anne, Illinois, beginning their nearly 67 years of married life together.

Oleene was a woman of many talents. She excelled as a seamstress, knitter, cook, and baker. Moreover, she guided a household of seven independently minded children, doing so with love, grace, and dignity. Her child-rearing philosophy revolved around the principle of "teach them how" rather than

simply doing for them.

Because of her many talents, Oleene was a valuable volunteer and she readily contributed to efforts of the St. Anne Academy Mothers Club and the St. Anne Sodality. Behind the scenes she regularly washed and pressed the linens for St. Anne Catholic Church and tended to the priests' vestments. Later in life she volunteered at Seconds to Go Consignment Store in support of St. Mary's Hospital.

Oleene's care and devotion to her children were hallmarks of her marriage. She was loved and respected by David, Peggy (Bruce) Shule, Donnie (Karla) Mark (Jackie) Lynn (Lewis) Lowry, Jeff (Joan), and Joe (Janet). Her 15 grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren, who fondly referred to her as "Nanny," could regularly see her applauding at recitals, ball games, and other events; they were also frequent recipients of her handiwork.

Throughout her long life Oleene faced adversity and setbacks; her enduring and abiding faith in God allowed her a positive outlook and attitude whatever the circumstances. She seldom shrank from a challenge and was willing to explore and try new things even in her advanced years. With the availability of new technologies, Oleene set about mastering her iPad, looking up new recipes and knitting patterns and following her family on social media. As a widow, she learned to FaceTime and would converse with one of her children every day, each child assigned a day of the week to pick up the call.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Fred; her parents, Eugene and Mariette Courville; her brother, Richard Courville; and her daughter-in-law, Mary Abood Bieber.

Visitation will be at Maternity BVM Catholic Church in Bourbonnais, Illinois at 10:00 a.m. on July 14, 2025 followed by a Mass of Christian Burial at 11:00 a.m. Following Mass, Oleene and Fred will be inurned at the Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elwood, Illinois at 1:00 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital or Maternity BVM Church.

Arrangements by Clancy-Gernon Funeral Home, Bourbonnais.



# Cemetery Details

## Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery

20953 Hoff Road  
Elwood, IL 60421

# Previous Events

## Memorial Visitation

JUL 14. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Maternity B.V.M. Catholic Church  
308 E. Marsile  
Bourbonnais, IL 60914  
(815) 933-8285  
<http://www.mbvchurch.org/>

## Memorial Mass

JUL 14. 11:00 AM (CT)

Maternity B.V.M. Catholic Church  
308 E. Marsile  
Bourbonnais, IL 60914  
(815) 933-8285  
<http://www.mbvchurch.org/>

# Tribute Wall

LN

“ Jerry and I went to 9:00 mass every Sunday for years. They were great people and we thought the world of them! We were out of the country for her memorial and mass. Hated to miss! Sending our love and prayers 💕🙏

Lori Naese - July 15, 2025 at 04:28 PM

AP

“ My sympathy to Lynn and the rest of the family. Your mother was always very kind and sweet and so welcoming. I am keeping prayers for all of you. Anne Padwojski

Anne Michelle Padwojski - July 14, 2025 at 09:43 AM

SN

“ Our sympathy to Oleene's family. Working in the Volunteer Office at St. Mary's Hospital, I so appreciated the time and dedication both Oleene and Fred gave to the hospital as volunteers and they were both a joy to visit with! Our thoughts and prayers are with all of you. Sandy & Larry Nims

Sandra Nims - July 11, 2025 at 05:05 PM

JJ

“ Jolinda Jones lit a candle in memory of Oleene Francine Bieber



Jolinda Jones - July 09, 2025 at 04:30 PM

KS

“ *Kathy Sullivan lit a candle in memory of  
Oleene Francine Bieber*



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**Kathy Sullivan** - July 09, 2025 at 10:44 AM



“ *1 file added to the album Memories Album*



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**Clancy-Gernon Funeral Homes** - February 06, 2025 at 03:22 PM

LL

“ *1 file added to the tribute wall*



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**Lynn M Lowry** - January 31, 2025 at 10:47 AM

MM

“ *My condolences to Olene's family. As a previous St. Mary's  
volunteer who called Bingo at Heritage Village, I enjoyed many  
wonderful evenings with Olene chatting and laughing during and  
after games. I consider it a privilege to have had Olene as a friend  
who enhanced my life. May God's love bring your family peace.*

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**Mary Logullo Moran** - January 28, 2025 at 04:50 PM

CW

“ *Christopher Wilcox lit a candle in memory of  
Oleene Francine Bieber*



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**Christopher Wilcox** - January 27, 2025 at 10:45 PM