



## Rita F. O'Connor

May 10, 1929 - July 4, 2025

Rita F. O'Connor, age 96, of Irwin, passed away Friday, July 4, 2025 at Prairieview Lutheran Home in Danforth.

She was born May 10, 1929 in Bradley, the daughter of Henry & Jenny Burton Menard.

Rita married Paul "Babe" O'Connor on September 16, 1950 at St. Joseph Catholic Church in Bradley. He preceded her in death on October 16, 1996. Rita enjoyed gardening, crocheting, dancing, and traveling. Most of all, she enjoyed spending time with her children and grandchildren.

Rita was a parishioner of St. James Catholic Church in Irwin.

Surviving are one son, Paul "Billy" (Kristin) O'Connor of Yorkville; five daughters, Linda (Terry) Burns of Bourbonnais, Paula O'Connor of Lake Mills, WI, Madonna (Roger) Gray of Clifton, Sandra (Luis) Duran of Kankakee, and Jodi (Dale) Prairie of Clifton; 18 grandchildren, David Ziemer, Jeremy Usewicz, Kevin Usewicz, Brenda Bednar, Richard Bednar, Jonathan Gray, Annie Zapotoczny, Theresa Kolasinski, Jeffery Fozzard, Emily Jensen, Ashley Tutt, Michael Prairie, Brandon Prairie, Connor Prairie, Zach O'Connor, Catie O'Connor, Meaghan O'Connor, and Liam O'Connor; 19 great-grandchildren; and one great-great-grandchild.

In addition to her husband, Rita is preceded in death by her parents; one daughter, Brenda Ziemer; five brothers, Melvin Menard, Bob Menard, James Menard, Paul Menard, and Jerry Menard; three sisters, Madonna Mantucca, Pauline Africano, and her twin sister, Theresa Sullivan.

Visitation will be held 4:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday, July 8, 2025 at Clancy-Gernon-Hertz Funeral Home in Kankakee.

Funeral Mass will be celebrated at 11:00 a.m. on Wednesday, July 9, 2025 at St. James Catholic Church in Irwin.

Rev. Ron Neitzke will celebrate the Mass.

Interment will follow at St. James Catholic Cemetery in Irwin.

Memorials may be made to St. James Catholic Church CCW, Prairieview Lutheran Home in Danforth, or for Masses.

# Cemetery Details

## St. James Cemetery in Irwin

Irwin, IL 60901

# Previous Events

## Visitation

JUL 8. 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

JUL 9. 11:00 AM (CT)

St. James the Apostle Catholic Church in Irwin  
4372 Main St.  
Irwin, IL 60901

# Tribute Wall

DL

“ Always so sweet and welcoming to us when we would go to her house for large family parties for holidays....RIP Rita

Danielle LaRoche - February 15 at 03:55 PM

KC

“ Katie Chigaros lit a candle in memory of Rita F. O'Connor



Katie Chigaros - July 09, 2025 at 11:43 AM



“ Cheeseboard Gourmet Gift was purchased for the family of Rita F. O'Connor.



July 08, 2025 at 04:20 PM

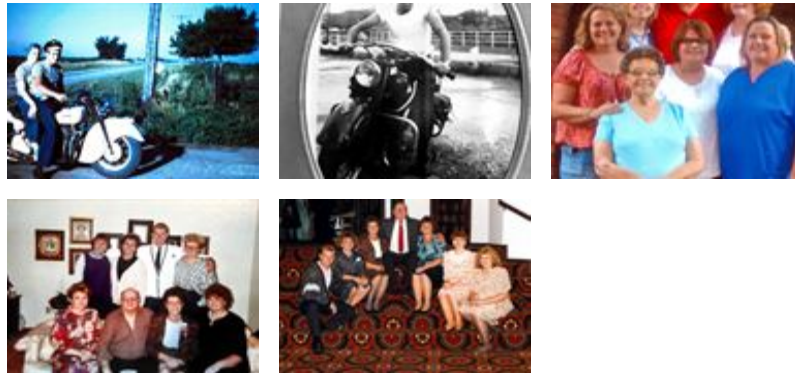


“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Rita F. O'Connor.

July 08, 2025 at 04:20 PM



“ 96 files added to the album LifeTributes



Clancy-Gernon Funeral Homes - July 07, 2025 at 03:45 PM

TW

“ I am saddened to learn of Aunt Rita's passing, but know that she will be welcomed with open arms by Uncle Babe, her parents and siblings in heaven. She was lovely, a gracious and funny woman and I have fond memories of her. Aunt Rita never stopped treating me like family and I am grateful for that. I pray that photographs and memories of her carry you through this difficult time. Much love to you all. ❤️

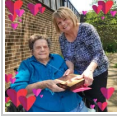
Teri (Menard) Worth - July 06, 2025 at 09:09 AM

MZ

“ Linda, Madonna ,and Family, Sorry for your loss you and your family are in my thoughts and prayers. Rita's sister Pauline was my neighbor and always spoke highly of her. Rest now Rita your time on earth is done. Hope your family was waiting at the gates of Heaven for you .  
MaDonna (Mazzuchi) Zasada and Brian Zasada, Sr.



Madonna M Zasada - July 05, 2025 at 08:06 PM



*Thank you Madonna*

**Linda Burns** - July 17, 2025 at 03:30 PM

SW

“ *Aunt Rita, after living a good long life, you now join all the rest of the Original Menard’s that will greet you with Hugs and Kisses. You will be missed by all of us. We always loved being with you and always had fun and great food. When you see the rest of your family please give them a big hug from me.*

**Susan Wawrzyniak** - July 05, 2025 at 05:30 PM

LB

*Thank You Sue. That was so sweet.*

**Linda Burns** - July 06, 2025 at 05:52 PM

SW

*We always loved seeing Aunt Rita....and all of the rest of the Menard’s and always had a great time at the Menards Family Reunion*

**Susan Wawrzyniak** - July 06, 2025 at 07:03 PM

MK

“ *Aunt Reta and her family were Part of many childhood memories for me and my family. She was always so sweet and caring. She always “checked in” with us every time we met. She will be missed.*

**Mary Kohl** - July 05, 2025 at 03:24 PM

CH

“ *Much love and prayers to the family. I will miss Rita and always remember Ma O'Connor's chili. A job well done with raising an amazing family.*

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**cathy hamende** - July 05, 2025 at 03:21 PM