



Lela Mae Russell

April 23, 1930 - October 25, 2016

Lela M. (Ford) Russell of Kalkaska, died Tuesday morning, October 25, 2016 at her residence in the Green House of Kalkaska Memorial Health Center. She passed surrounded by the loving and generous Green House staff and with her favorite caregiver. Lela was born on April 23, 1930 in Danville, Illinois and lived in both Chicago and Kentucky before moving to Michigan, and later Maryland. She returned to Michigan in 1977 where she spent the remainder of her life first in southwestern Michigan and then in Antrim and Kalkaska counties. Lela served the United Methodist Church as pastor's wife and educator at churches in Kentucky, Illinois and Michigan. She worked for many years as an Administrative Assistant for businesses both large and small, including Community Hospital in Watervliet, MI and the American Cooking Institute in St. Joseph. She also worked for a number of years at First of America Bank (now PNC) while living in northwestern Michigan. She loved sewing, knitting, reading and cooking, and was famous for her pies. Lela loved spending time with her family and helped in the homeschooling of her beloved granddaughter, Raechel Lenz. She also lead spiritual retreats and women's gatherings for many years and enjoyed and was nourished by many friendships within her community and lately within the staff of Eden Center and the Green House of KMHC. Lela is survived by two daughters, Ruth (Richard) Lenz and Rebecca (Timothy) Finch both of Mancelona, granddaughter Raechel Lenz of Kalkaska, step-grandson Michael Finch of Seminole, FL, as well as two nephews and a niece. She was preceded in death by her parents,

her brother Marine PFC Lowell Ford, during WWII, and an infant brother, Bobby Lee Ford. A gathering to celebrate and honor Lela's life will be held Sunday, November 13, 2016 at 1:30 pm at the CETA Hall, 6615 County Road 612, Kalkaska. Please contact the family with any questions. Memorial contributions may be made to Lela's favorite charity Doctors Without Borders (doctorswithoutborders.org, the ecard to rrenz@norcocmh.org) or locally to Kalkaska Memorial Health Center's Eden Center/Green House. Please note any specific department or project and Lela's name. Arrangements entrusted to Kalkaska Funeral Home and Cremation Services.

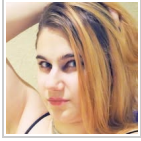
Previous Events

Memorial Gathering

NOV 13. 1:30 PM (ET)

CETA Hall
6615 County Road 612 NE
Kalkaska, MI 49646

Tribute Wall



“ *Nana, I miss you more than ever. I wish I could see you.
--your "favorite granddaughter" Raechel* ❤️

Raechel Lenz - December 30, 2019 at 12:08 PM

CF

“ *To have been in her presence, to have laughed with her, and to have been loved by her will forever be a joy my heart will hold! My times with her are such a treasure! My heartfelt joy to her on her passage to a better place in that new, pain free, perfect body we so often discussed. What joy you daughters brought her and her beloved Rachel! God called home a good one indeed! Connie Farrier*

Connie Farrier - November 09, 2016 at 12:20 PM

RU

Thank you so much Connie. She so enjoyed your talks over coffee and donuts.

Ruth - November 11, 2016 at 09:40 AM

RU

“ *3 files added to the tribute wall*



Ruth - November 07, 2016 at 10:17 AM

SH

“ Lela introduced me to the poetry of Mary Oliver. Her words from "In Blackwater Woods" have meant so much to me through the fires of loss this year.

*"To live in this world
you must be able to do three things:
to love what is mortal;
to hold it against your bones knowing
your own life depends on it;
and, when the time comes to let it
go,
to let it go."*

Susan Hood - November 02, 2016 at 06:17 PM

RU

She loved, held on with strong hands and heart and finally let go. She loved Mary Oliver. Thank you.

Ruth - November 07, 2016 at 10:06 AM

SH

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Susan Hood - November 02, 2016 at 06:11 PM

SH

“ Susan and Gary Hood purchased the Enchanted Cottage for the family of Lela Mae Russell.



Susan and Gary Hood - November 02, 2016 at 05:44 PM

SH

“ 1 file added to the album New Album Name



Susan Hood - November 02, 2016 at 05:31 PM

RU

So wonderful to see this Susan....the music and choices of photos are priceless. Thank you.

Ruth - November 07, 2016 at 10:07 AM

KG

“ *My heart and prayers are with you all as you grieve the loss of your beloved Lela. I don't know who wrote the obituary, but it was beautiful and a lovely tribute to a very special woman.*

Kathy Goeppinger (A friend in Texas)

Kathy Goeppinger - November 02, 2016 at 09:26 AM

RU

Thank you Kathy. Rebecca wrote it which helped share a little bit of her with you all.

Ruth - November 07, 2016 at 10:10 AM