

Nadine Kenkel, 56

Feb. 25, 1958 - Aug. 25, 2014

HARLAN — Nadine Ann Kenkel was born on February 25, 1958 to Leland and Mary (Weih) Schmitz and grew up in Westphalia. She was baptized and confirmed at St. Boniface's Catholic Church in Westphalia and graduated from Harlan Community High School in 1976, where she spent several years playing for the Cyclonette basketball team. Nadine was capped as a Registered Nurse from Jennie Edmundson College of Nursing in 1979.

June 2, 1979, Nadine was united in marriage to Steve Kenkel at St. Boniface's Catholic Church in Westphalia. They were blessed with two children: Jenna and Tony. Steve and Nadine farmed the 5 generation family farm near Earling and were active members of St. Joseph's Catholic Church. Nadine worked her entire nursing career, 34 years, at Myrtue Medical Center, in Harlan, working in many areas, including the Emergency Room, as charge nurse on the floor, starting the Cardiac Rehab Program, and most recently Home Health and Hospice. She chose to work part-time to be able to spend more time with her children after they were born. She retired in February 2013. Nadine loved taking care of others and helping anyone she could. Nadine was a devoted wife and mother, who enjoyed attending every HCHS event, even after Jenna and Tony were out of school. She enjoyed making treats for the athletic teams and also for her many nieces and nephews. Nadine loved working in her garden and canning salsa and jam. She was also famous for her homemade bread and Chex-mix, which she shared with everyone! Nadine found joy in sending cards and messages to others in times of need. Nadine loved visiting family and friends, cheering on the Nebraska Cornhuskers and Harlan Cyclones, sitting on the beach listening to the waves, walking, and spending as much time as she could spoiling her precious granddaughter, Priya Nadine.

Nadine was diagnosed with Stage 4 ovarian cancer in April 2010. Throughout her entire journey, she endured 3 rounds of intense chemotherapy, all while educating over 1,000 people on ovarian cancer, while sharing her personal story. She became active with Colleen's Dream Foundation, which solely raises money for research to find an early-detection tool for ovarian cancer, since there isn't one. Nadine initiated the first ever Teal Out at HCHS and Ovarian Open with all funds going to Colleen's Dream. Nadine also began coordinating the Red Cross Blood Drives in Earling in 2011, more than tripling the amount of units collected. She received the Loess Hill's Chapter Blood Services Award in May 2014. Nadine valiantly fought her cancer for four and half years, always with a positive attitude and smile on her face, making the most out of each day. She always said "I am strong. Together we're stronger." Nadine died peacefully surrounded by her family on Monday, August 25, 2014, having attained the age of 56 years and 6 months.

Nadine was preceded in death by her father, Leland. Nadine is survived by her husband Steve Kenkel of Earling; children Jenna (Todd) Hucka of Harlan and Tony Kenkel of Earling; granddaughter Priya Nadine; mother Mary Schmitz of Harlan; sister Annette (Bill) Dotzler of Sioux City; brothers: Randy (Julie) Schmitz of Bettendorf, Neil (Judi) Schmitz of Westphalia, Leon (Jan) Schmitz of Parkville, MO, and Scott (Linda) Schmitz of Auburn, WA; father and mother-in-law George and Bonnie Kenkel of Harlan and in-laws: Connie (Jeff) Fries, Carole (Charlie) Mohr, Sandy (Chad) Davis, Sherry Frost, Roger (Cristie) Kenkel, Ronda (Jeff) Shirley, and Sara (John) Kenkel; 28 nieces and nephews, 7 great-nieces and nephews, other family members and many friends.

The 11:00 a.m. Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated by Rev. Chris Fontanini and Homilist Deacon Jim Deblauw on Saturday, August 30, 2014 at St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Earling. Deacon Gail Stessman assisted with the service. Music was provided by Tyler Gubbels, the Earling Piano Group, and the Schmitz Cousins. Serving as casket bearers were Tom Meissner, Dave Kramer, Dave Wisniewski, Jeff Fries, Jill Ferry, Brian Grote, Matt Koesters, and Gaige Lytle. In an effort to continue educating others, Nadine chose to donate her body to Creighton University Medical School.



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