



Judy Kay Gardner

October 22, 1945 - March 21, 2025

Judy Kay Gardner, a woman who loved in such a big way that bellies were never empty and hearts were always full, passed away March 21, 2025. Judy, 79, of Vermontville was born October 22, 1945 on the K-Bar Ranch in Hominy, OK to Thomas Ernest Marcum and Agatha Marie (Upton) Marcum. A cherished member of the First Congregational Church of Vermontville and the Eastern Star, Judy dedicated her life to bringing people together, ensuring everyone felt welcome and loved.

A loyal school bus driver for the Maple Valley School District, Judy was more than just a chauffeur to the children; she was a friendly face and a comforting supportive figure. Her compassionate and responsible nature made a lasting impact on students and parents alike. Following her retirement in 2000, Judy recognized the profound importance of helping those in need and devoted her time to making sure no one went hungry as a volunteer at the Vermontville Food Bank. Additionally, Judy was an honorary member of the Maple Valley FFA and volunteered her time as an FFA Chaperone at State Conventions. Her efforts embodied the true spirit of generosity and community support.

A woman of many talents, Judy was known for her love of sewing quilts and costumes, crocheting personalized gifts for family-especially for newborns-and created the beloved home, "A Hallmark House," a gathering place where family came together during the holidays. In 1992, Judy conceptualized and

sewed an entire ensemble for Christine's Miss Rodeo America pageant. Judy's creativity extended to community events as well. She designed costumes and parade floats for her grandkids at the Vermontville Maple Syrup Festival, showcasing her artistic flair and bringing joy to those who attended. In her spare time, Judy enjoyed bowling and fishing with friends and embarking on road trips to rodeos. Judy was an avid gardener who grew vegetables and zinnias in the garden on her beloved farm. She enjoyed the birds, especially the finches and mourning doves she attracted. Judy embraced all of life's adventures with enthusiasm.

Family was the heart of everything Judy did. She diligently raised her children to be good community members and instilled the same values in her grandchildren. She organized gatherings with an overabundance of food-18 courses worth-and lovingly baked birthday cakes and holiday cinnamon rolls for her children and grandchildren. Watching volleyball and football games with her grandkids were among her cherished moments, further highlighting her supportive spirit.

Judy is survived by her loving husband, Douglas Gardner; her children, Christine (Eric) Terpening, Gordie Gardner, and Dennis (Kathy) Gardner; her grandchildren, Josey (Bernie) Smith, Marcum (Avianna Jackson) Terpening, Chelsey (Dane) Saylor, Chase Gardner, Dillon Terpening, and Jessie Gardner; and her great-grandchildren, Gage Saylor, Raelyn Saylor, and Bernie Smith. She is also remembered by her sister, Anna Lou Hansbarger. Judy was preceded in death by her brothers Joseph Marcum and Jim Marcum, and her sister Laquita Valdick.

Judy's legacy of kindness, bravery, and compassion will continue to inspire all who knew her. As we remember her life, let us honor her memory by embracing one another with the same warmth and generosity she shared with the world.

Friends are encouraged to support Judy's family by attending services or sharing memories on her Tribute Page at www.prayfuneral.com. Visitation is Thursday, March 27, 2025 from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Pray Funeral Home in Charlotte. Funeral services are Thursday, March 27 at 1:00 p.m. at Pray Funeral Home in Charlotte. A procession to Woodlawn Cemetery will follow funeral services. The funeral will be webcast so you may watch it from any computer, smartphone, or mobile device that has internet access. Go to www.prayfuneral.com, click on Judy's tribute, then click on Photos and Videos from your computer (or Media from your smart phone). If desired, the family suggests memorial contributions to Maple Valley FFA. The family is in the care of Pray Funeral Home, Charlotte.

Cemetery Details

Woodlawn Cemetery

10911 Vermontville Hwy
Vermontville, MI 49096

Previous Events

Visitation

MAR 27. 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM (ET)

Pray Funeral Home
401 W Seminary St
Charlotte, MI 48813

Funeral

MAR 27. 1:00 PM (ET)

Pray Funeral Home
401 W Seminary St
Charlotte, MI 48813

Burial

MAR 27. 2:30 PM (ET)

Woodlawn Cemetery
10911 Vermontville Hwy
Vermontville, MI 49096

Tribute Wall



“ Pray Funeral Home, Inc created a Webcast in memory of Judy Kay Gardner



Pray Funeral Home, Inc. - March 27, 2025 at 01:04 PM



“ Pray Funeral Home, Inc created a Tribute Video in memory of Judy Kay Gardner



Pray Funeral Home, Inc. - March 25, 2025 at 07:59 PM



She was an absolutely Lovely person. I'm so proud of my mom.

Gordon Gardner - March 26, 2025 at 07:58 PM

R(

“ Judy, Doug, Woody (Durwood) and I use to go out to eat and play cards together. We had alot of fun times together. I will miss Judy and pray for peace to her family at this time of loss.

Rosemary Hahn (Hammond) - March 29, 2025 at 03:29 PM

KC

“ Kelli C. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Judy Kay Gardner.

Kelli C. - March 27, 2025 at 02:30 PM

SN

“ Sheri and Naki planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Judy Kay Gardner.

Sheri and Naki - March 26, 2025 at 04:05 PM

SN

“ Sheri and Naki purchased the Simply Elegant Sp
athiphyllum for the family of Judy Kay Gardner.



Sheri and Naki - March 26, 2025 at 04:05 PM



“ 51 files added to the album Life Tributes



Pray Funeral Home, Inc. - March 25, 2025 at 07:50 PM

MC

“ Mrs. Gardner was a breath of joy, greatness and sunshine all bundled into one beautiful person. Have known her for a lifetime through 4H and horses and was blessed to be part of her world. Fond memories growing up of time spent at their farm hanging out with Chrissy, 4H meetings and riding horses. She loved her kids and grandkids and made the most of her time on Earth. A smile and a hug every time I saw her... a genuine soul who will be missed. Prayers and hugs to you all... Mr. Gardner, Gordie, Denny and Chrissy.

Monique Colizzi - March 24, 2025 at 10:31 PM

DH

“ Our thoughts and prayers to Doug and family. Sincerely Brinda and Dave Hawkins

David L Hawkins - March 24, 2025 at 06:12 PM

RD

“ Ron Betts & Sandy DePue purchased the Basket Full of Wishes for the family of Judy Kay Gardner.



Ron Betts & Sandy DePue - March 24, 2025 at 11:43 AM

RD

“ Ron Betts & Sandy DePue planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Judy Kay Gardner.

Ron Betts & Sandy DePue - March 24, 2025 at 11:43 AM

DV

“ Visited Doug and Judy with our Dad, Bruce Stedge several times parking his RV next to Judy’s beautiful garden. Such great memories of sitting at the kitchen table chatting over coffee and cinnamon rolls. Such great memory. She will be missed her on earth, God has a beautiful new angel. Peace to you all Debbie and Sandy Stedge

Debra VanBlaricom - March 23, 2025 at 11:44 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Judy Gardner.

March 23, 2025 at 10:14 AM



“ Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Judy Kay Gardner.



March 23, 2025 at 10:14 AM