



## Mary Lee Heslinga

March 1, 1939 - January 23, 2025

Mary Lee Heslinga, 85, of Oskaloosa, died Thursday, January 23, 2025, at the Mahaska Health Hospice Serenity House in Oskaloosa.

Mary was the daughter of Leland (Lee) Alvin and Pauline {Betty} Elizabeth (Baxter) Coulon. She was born March 1, 1939, in Mt. Clemens, Michigan. She grew up on the family farm near What Cheer, Iowa, where she was a 1956 What Cheer High School graduate. Mary then attended Simpson College, where she was a member of the Tri Delta Sorority. She later earned her degree in elementary education at William Penn College, where she graduated in 1970.

Mary married Garold F. Heslinga on June 19, 1970, in Oskaloosa. They celebrated 52 years of marriage before he died in 2022. Mary was an active member of the First Presbyterian Church of Oskaloosa and was active in the Presbyterian Women's Group and church choir. She was also a member of P.E.O. Chapter X for many years.

Mary loved flowers and enjoyed planting in the spring and caring for them through the summer. Hosting fish fries and barbeques on her patio was a special time for the whole family. Mary loved to sew and needlepoint. She made many outfits for her daughters through the years, from swimsuits to prom dresses; she also created needlepoint Christmas stockings for each of her grandchildren. Garold and Mary loved to travel together and were fortunate to have made many trips abroad and stateside. Heading west toward the mountains was a favorite destination, and they enjoyed snow

skiing with friends and later family.

The most important thing in Mary's life was her family. Becoming a grandmother to eight brought her great joy, and then becoming a great-grandmother to 13 (soon to be 14) and great-great-grandmother to three made her joy complete. They all adored their Grandma Mary and showered her with hugs whenever they visited. She will be greatly missed by her family, which includes her children and their spouses: Kim and Jack Scieszinski of Albia, Vicki and Ron VanDerPol of Oskaloosa, Kathy Heslinga of Edwards, CO, Jane and Tim Fessler of West Des Moines, and Mark Heslinga of Salem, OR; seven grandsons and their wives/significant others and one granddaughter: Adam (Sarah) Scieszinski, Bill (Lisa) Scieszinski, Jesse (Erica) VanDerPol, Jacob (Lexi McGohtlen) VanDerPol, Tim (Haley) VanDerPol, Brad (Alyssa) VanDerPol, Beau (Alisa) Heslinga, and Anna Heslinga; 13 great-grandchildren: Chase (Sara), Carson (Savanah Good), Cash, Wil, Jack, Andrew, Ben, Noah, Eli, Violet, Callum, Afton, Myles and soon to be born, Malea; and three great-great-grandchildren: Elizabeth, Olivia, and Priscilla. She is also survived by a sister, Gretchen Updegraff of Webster, WI; a brother-in-law, Ken Howard of Oskaloosa; a sister-in-law, JoAnn Cooper of Greeley, CO: and many nieces, nephews, and cousins.

In addition to her parents, Mary was preceded in death by her husband, Garold, a son, Timothy, and sister, Betsy Howard.

A visitation and celebration of life will be held at 1 p.m. on Saturday, May 10, 2025, at the First Presbyterian Church in Oskaloosa. Following the celebration of life, a private family burial will be held at Forest Cemetery. Langkamp Funeral Chapel is handling Mary's arrangements. Memorial contributions can be made to Stephen Memorial Animal Shelter, First Presbyterian Church or Mahaska Health Foundation for the Hospice Serenity House.

# Cemetery Details

## Forest Cemetery

934 North 9th ST  
Oskaloosa, IA 52577  
secretary@forestcemetery.com  
<http://www.forestcemetery.org/>

# Previous Events

## Celebration of Life

**MAY 10.** 1:00 PM (CT)

First Presbyterian Church  
405 High Ave. E.  
Oskaloosa, IA 52577  
presby1@mahaska.org  
<http://www.oskaloosafirstpresbyterian.org>

# Tribute Wall

LK

“ *Kim, Jack and families. Even though I only met your Mom once Kim, I saw what a lovely lady she was. Please accept my sincere condolences and prayers. May she always be in your heart and those great memories will make you sing with joy. Sending love, Lana Kaldenberg/Eells*

**Lana Kaldenberg** - January 29, 2025 at 10:03 PM

SA

*Kim and Jack, I never met her in person but didn't need to. You're FB posts and pictures brought her to life. She was a beautiful woman (I see where you get your beauty from. May you find happiness and solace in your memories and peace in what you did for her in last past days. God Bless you and your family as they work through the finality of her death. Love and Care about you. Susan Ammons*

**Susan Ammons** - January 29, 2025 at 10:33 PM

SV

“ *Mary was always so warm and welcoming. With smile or a laugh. She will be greatly miss. She is at peace*

**Sondra & Jerry VanDerPol** - January 26, 2025 at 07:11 PM

CM

“ *CINDY MOTT lit a candle in memory of Mary Lee Heslinga*



**CINDY MOTT** - January 24, 2025 at 04:31 PM

SS

“ To the family of Mary Heslinga, I am so sorry for your loss. Mary was such a kind and nice person. You will be missed by many. I know Garold will be happy, I can hear him say "what took you so long". Again so sorry for your loss.

Susan Frost Salevsky - January 23, 2025 at 10:38 PM

RC

“ Rhonda Callison lit a candle in memory of Mary Lee Heslinga



Rhonda Callison - January 23, 2025 at 07:37 PM

RC

Most loving and sincere condolences to my precious friend Kim, Vickie and families. Mary was one of the most loving human beings I will ever know. She always treated me so well, was always welcoming when I was in their home, and I enjoyed her home cooked meals many times when we were growing up! Always gracious, kind, loving, smiling. Prayers for peace and comfort to you all 🙏❤️

Rhonda Callison - January 23, 2025 at 07:42 PM



“ I'm terribly sorry to hear of Mary's passing. I've known her since Kim and I were in grade school. Such a pleasant lady, but with Hes now.



Sandy Hildebrand - January 23, 2025 at 04:26 PM