

Lois Black – AD 1976 Nursing

Age 93 – Fargo, ND

Lois Scilley Black was born on November 14, 1930, at the family home in Leonard, ND to parents Mary (Brown) and George Scilley, their only daughter of three children. She had a rural upbringing and was proud to say that she had read every book that the little town library had to offer. She competed in basketball, was a cheerleader for boys' sports and was Valedictorian of her class. She enjoyed joining her dad on his mail route and learned how to drive in the sand hills of southeastern ND.

Following high school, she took classes at both the Dakota Business College and North Dakota Agricultural College (NDSU). Summers found her back in Leonard, cheering on her high school boyfriend's baseball team. In 1950, on October 14, that boyfriend, Howard Black, married Lois in his hometown of Sheldon, ND. They lived with Lois' parents in Leonard and Howard farmed in the area.

In the four years that followed, they had two children and settled in North Fargo. There Howard became the custodian, bus driver, and parish concession manager at Barnett Baseball Field (now site of North High). A third child was born shortly before Howard became independent operator of Broadway Phillips 66 on 15th Avenue. Lois would be his bookkeeper partner throughout their 20 years in business. The fourth and final child came along shortly before they bought and moved to their house on 20th Avenue North, then on the fringes of town. She would live in that house for 60 years!

As the kids grew up, she was the primary caregiver and housekeeper, essentially acting as chauffeur for her four ice skating children, oftentimes opening the arena in downtown Fargo at 5:30 on the frigid winter mornings! The girls were competitive figure skaters while the boys played hockey up to and through high school. The boys attended North High School while the girls went to Shanley, setting up a whirlwind of motion throughout the state attending and cheering on her kids' various teams and activities.

Since her boys and husband were playing golf, she decided to join in the fun and became an accomplished player. She was then working daily and could no longer participate in Ladies Day at Edgewood Golf Course, so she started a group that played after work hours called "The Ladies of the Evening". She also found time to attend classes in Taekwondo and practiced Tai Chi.

In the meantime, at age 40, Lois managed to re-enroll at NDSU, earning certification as a Registered Nurse and beginning her career in nursing at St. John's Hospital in south Fargo. After several years there she moved on to work at the Veterans Administration until retirement number one. She then began service at Rosewood on Broadway that kept her busy until the age of 80! Throughout was her continuing devotion to Holy Spirit (all her children attended parochial school there), smoky room bridge clubs (the kids well remember), bowling and golf leagues, etc.

After Lois' first retirement, she and Howard took time to travel. They spent time in Europe, Hawaii, on cruises, and some winters in Texas and Florida with their daughter. They also traversed the country by car, visiting her son, nephew, and aunt in California, touring New England and all points in between.

Lois left her longtime home on 20th Avenue and moved ten blocks north to Trollwood Apartments. There she had a close group of friends, including three elderly women who also attended Holy Spirit Church. And, coming full circle in a way, she became the weekly chauffeur for their Sunday services, dubbing themselves "The Church Ladies", with Lois driving them in her Prayer Mobile.

Lois is survived by her children, Mary (James) Shaw, Michael, Kevin (Ruth) Black; son-in-law, David Dahlsad; three grandchildren, one great-grandchild, and a nephew. She was preceded in death by her husband of 63 years; her daughter, Kathy; grandson, Simon; her parents; and her brothers, Maynard and Kenneth.

Visitation will be held at Holy Spirit Catholic Church of Fargo on Friday, March 1, 2024, at 1:00 p.m. followed by a Funeral Mass at 2:00. Interment with Howard at Holy Cross Cemetery will follow.

The family would like to thank Sanford Health for their exemplary care in our mom's final days. We would especially like to thank Megan for her above and beyond kindness and caring in the final hours. We would also like to thank Father Lafromboise for (miraculously?) being there with the family and friends at bedside and offering the most touching departure from this life anyone could ask for. We know that Mom would have appreciated that.