



## Lori J. Lichtenfeld

August 8, 1961 - February 6, 2024

Lori Jean Lichtenfeld, "Grandma Lori", departed on Tuesday February 6, 2024 following an exceptionally brief fight with terminal cancer. True to her form, she courageously put forth a strong fight.

Born in the Steel City of Gary Indiana on August 8, 1961 (with the maiden name of Glancy) -- the famed year John F. Kennedy took office and Del Shannon's No. 5 (in the top 100 singles) Billboard hit "Runaway" filled the airwaves -- Lori was born to Elizabeth Williamson (nee Poe). The middle of five children, she was proudly also raised by stepfather "Daddy Bob" Robert Williamson. Their family first resided in the Black Oak part of the region, before heading far North to the tiny town of Siren Wisconsin (current population around 800), as she was still in elementary school.

Growing up, Lori lived a life of few means, but learned to make the most of what's there. The Williamson tribe lived off of a small farm and Lori did much of the cooking, sew/repairs to clothing, feeding the animals and, yet, still found time to be in both drama club and cheerleading at Siren High School. It was during the formative years Lori met her best friend, of half a century, in Brenda Bentley, when they were both around 11 years old. In 1979 she graduated as a Dragon, and promptly, at the suggestion of her family, left the house at 17 to head back to Northwest Indiana and start life.

Lori worked a number of jobs, including a server at the now defunct Sizzler (where it was discovered in an episode, that she was deeply allergic to shellfish), before landing what became her primary career, the teller end of banking. Starting, in the early of the part the 80's, she joined the staff at Gary National in downtown, before transitioning onto Gainer Bank, situated in the current Chase Building (on Broadway in Merrillville). Banking allowed Lori financial stability and connecting with the broad public. Many of her customers and co-workers drew upon deep relationships in that service industry. As time went on, the younger staff members affectionately dubbed her, "Momma Lori".

It was from the career move, that Lori was able to really become a mother, thanks to the chance encounter with her polar opposite that also worked in the Gainer Building. In 1983, a skinny local Jewish guy, fro and all, came into her office to make deposits from Comay's jewelers. Lori met and was attracted to the oblivious Bruce Lichtenfeld. In fact, she asked him out six times, before he came to his senses and obliged to join her for a free pass to the cafeteria buffet.

Bruce and Lori dated for a while and officially tied the knot — following her conversion to Judaism — in 1985 as part of a parade of receptions ... three to be exact (another one later, we'll get to that).

In 1986, at 25, Lori welcomed the birth of their oldest child Joshua Michael. Nearly six years later, they were pleasantly surprised when daughter, Erin Ryann, completed the order (in 1991). By the final birth, the family was already residing in Crown Point, Indiana. In 1993, the Lichtenfelds bought their forever home in Lakes of The Four Seasons.

Lori spent a lot of her children's elementary days as a stay-at-home mom, manager, friend and confidant. There was always an open door policy with her kids and Lori wanted to know everything, good or bad, going on. She was a

fierce advocate for the pair, though could never sit still herself. Leading to the formation of her own Gift basket business, "Love's Creations". Thanks to her knack of sewing (an officially licensed tailor), crafting, knitting and crocheting, she traveled as far as Canada with her true life's passion. Simply put, Lori could make anything out of nothing. This also went for many of her famous dishes, that, to this day, don't have documented recipes.

Eventually Lori, made a full return to banking with Mercantile Bank (currently BMO) and spent another decade, as a teller manager. She was key in the opening of the location on Broadway in Crown Point and did a number of philanthropic events (such as March of Dimes). In 2001 came the dissolution of Lori and Bruce's marriage, but surprisingly, the couple grew stronger apart and remarried by fall of 2005 (on the same date February 17, for the fourth ceremony). In case anyone is trying to calculate, neither Lori nor Bruce counted their time apart in the total tally of almost 39 years.

For most of her last decade, Lori watched her kids transition into families. In October of 2016 Josh married Jessica (nee Clusserath) and a few months after Erin married David Kujawa in March of 2017. Twenty days after the nuptials, it was Lori's proudest moment when the first grandbaby arrived in Liam Stanley Kujawa. In July of 2018 came Molly Elizabeth (named after Lori's mom) Kujawa. In June of 2020 came Joelle Rae Lichtenfeld. Then in July of 2021, the birth of Max John Kujawa. Lori poignantly proclaimed them her "baby angels" and let them get away with basically everything their parents wouldn't have. She absolutely adored the role and was also the caregiver to each of them, up until her illness in November.

Lori is preceded in death by parents Elizabeth and Robert Williamson, in-laws Melvin and Elaine Lichtenfeld, Sister-in-law Michelle Reis and dear family friend Jeffrey Gross.

Lori is survived in death by many beloved family and friends, including Brother Jimmy Williamson, Niece Traci Williamson, Brother-in-law Dean (Terry) Lichtenfeld, Sister-in-law Jan (Ira) Chemerinsky, Brother-in-law Paul Reis, Stepmother Joyce Lichtenfeld and many nieces, nephews, cousins, and dear people.

Lori will boldy be remembered for her feisty character, candor, compassion, wit, sayings and overt sarcasm. In the last moment of life, "Sis" Erin was right by her side and it went peacefully. Billy Joel said the cliché the best, "Only The Good Die Young". Even this hot tamale.

A memorial visitation will be held on Friday, February 23, 2024, from 3 p.m. – 7 p.m. at Burns Funeral Home, 10101 Broadway, Crown Point IN. [www.burnsfuneral.com](http://www.burnsfuneral.com).

# Previous Events

## Memorial Service

FEB **23**. 3:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Burns Funeral Home & Crematory - Crown Point

10101 Broadway

Crown Point, IN 46307

(219) 769-0044

[info@burnsfuneral.com](mailto:info@burnsfuneral.com)

<https://www.burnsfuneral.com/>

# Tribute Wall

PR

“ I am sorry to hear about Lori. I empathize with you Bruce, Josh, and Erin.  
Tom died in October. I hope that the memory of Lori will bring you comfort  
and peace. Patti Rycerz

Patti Rycerz - July 15, 2024 at 12:50 PM

TW

“ We know Bruce through many car purchases and our Blaskovich connection. You have our deepest condolences and we are sorry we only met Lori in passing at Schepel once, but wish we could've known her based on the wonderful obituary. God bless you Bruce and your beautiful family! So very sorry for your loss.



Tom and June Wolf - April 08, 2024 at 10:16 AM

CP

“ Chris and Rhonda Pavlides purchased the Love's Journey for the family of Lori J. Lichtenfeld.



Chris and Rhonda Pavlides - February 21, 2024 at 08:26 PM

TF

“ The Brotsche Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Lori J. Lichtenfeld.

The Brotsche Family - February 21, 2024 at 12:48 PM



“ *Basket Full of Wishes was purchased for the family of Lori J. Lichtenfeld.*



February 21, 2024 at 12:48 PM



“ *Love from Bill, Margo & Family purchased the Country Basket Blooms for the family of Lori J. Lichtenfeld.*



**Love from Bill, Margo & Family** - February 20, 2024 at 12:31 PM



“ *Schepel Cadillac purchased the Rainbow Of Remembrance Spray for the family of Lori J. Lichtenfeld.*



**Schepel Cadillac** - February 19, 2024 at 10:59 AM



“ *Schepel Buick-GMC purchased the Lavender Reflections Spray for the family of Lori J. Lichtenfeld.*



**Schepel Buick-GMC** - February 19, 2024 at 10:54 AM

KL

“ I am so very sorry for your loss. Lori was a great woman and I am glad to have known her.

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**Kathryn Laver** - February 14, 2024 at 09:24 AM

MS

“ To the Lichtenfeld family, Bill and I are so very sorry for your loss, Lori was a strong sassy woman, always standing for what was right, someone to admire.

*I met Lori long before we knew Lori had a Poe family connection with my husband Bill.*

*I met Lori back in 1981 when I accepted a desk position at Gary National Bank's main office after working several years at the Southlake Mall Office. She was fun to work with, and yes she was a badass, but we became good friends*

*We met up again when we realized Erin and our youngest son Dan were in the same preschool class. I always admired her creativity and talent and we worked together putting together costumes for the end of the year preschool programs*

*We had remained friends throughout the years, even after we had moved out of state, with an occasional phone call or a visit when I was in town*

*I will truly miss Lori, and wish we could be with you on the 23rd, but unfortunately we won't be able to be there .*

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**Mary Kay Stegall** - February 11, 2024 at 11:09 AM

EH

“ Momma Lori will be deeply missed. I’ve learned so much from her and will carry that in my professional carrier. “CYA, ladies, CYA”

*And let me not forget the cooking. No matter how much she grilled me on putting too much or too less of an ingredient, it never turned out like Momma Lori’s. Josh and Erin thank you for sharing this beautiful woman. ❤️*

Eva Huerta - February 09, 2024 at 04:04 PM

AA

“ I am so very sorry to hear about your loss. My thoughts and prayers go out to your entire family. From, Annette A. Alicea-Hurson and Family



Annette A. Alicea-Hurson - February 09, 2024 at 01:07 PM



“ Pretty Please was purchased for the family of Lori J. Lichtenfeld.



February 09, 2024 at 12:06 PM

LG

“ Love, The Schepel BDC Girls planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Lori J. Lichtenfeld.

Love, The Schepel BDC Girls - February 09, 2024 at 12:06 PM

EK

“ I’ll start this thing off...my mother was simply put, one of a kind. She loved fiercely and advocated for those she cherished most. My mom was hardened by some of life’s trials and tribulations, but she rose above and proudly took the role of matriarch of the Lichtenfeld clan. To know my mom is to know sacrifice, sarcasm, and smiles. My mom certainly left an impression on everyone she met. Depending on the receiving end, it may not have always been the most pleasant. My mom was bold and strong and had no issue expressing her views. Although, we didn’t have as long to prepare for her final battle, she took everything in stride. My mom never wanted people to look upon her with pity or sorrow, so instead let’s remember her for her zest and feisty spirit! Please feel free to share some of your memories on this page. I’m always pleasantly surprised to be reminded or educated about the exceptionally multifaceted person that my mom was.

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**Erin Kujawa** - February 09, 2024 at 12:00 PM