



## Rhonda L Safstrom

January 5, 1959 - August 11, 2023

Rhonda L. (Martin) Safstrom, age 64, of Portage, IN, passed away Friday, August 11, 2023, at home, surrounded by her family. Rhonda was born January 5, 1959, in Gary, IN to the late Jim and Helen (nee Leach) Martin. She grew up in East Gary (Lake Station) and graduated from East Gary Edison High School Class of '77. Rhonda was the Valedictorian of her class. She attended Purdue Calumet and graduated with her Bachelor's of Science in Nursing. Rhonda continued her studies in the area of Pediatrics and was a Pediatric nurse. She was a nurse for a total of 44 years, 37 of which were as a school nurse for the School City of Hammond. Rhonda loved and took pride in her job and loved her students and staff at Morton Elementary.

She was a long time member of NASN (National Association of School Nurses). Rhonda was also a long serving representative for PYB (Portage Youth Basketball). She was a member at Classics Bodyworks where she enjoyed Zumba. Rhonda enjoyed bowling with her parents and uncles at Hobart Lanes.

She was an avid Notre Dame Football fan (and could often be heard across the house "coaching" them). Rhonda was also a huge Cubs fan and loved watching the Cubs with her son, Arthur, and always looked forward to going to the movies with him. She thoroughly enjoyed cheering her grandkids on in all their activities and had gamechanger mastered to watch her grand-daughters softball games. Rhonda will be dearly missed by all of her family and friends. She was the softball, basketball, soccer mom. She was a valiant warrior to the

end.

Rhonda was preceded in death by her parents-Jim and Helen Martin; two brothers-Jimmy and Al Martin; nephew-Scott Smoot; great nephew-Baylon Meyer. She is survived by her children- Ashley (Frank) Montoleone of Jacksonville, FL, Emily Safstrom, Arthur Safstrom of Portage, IN, Trey (Sarah) Safstrom of Ruthon, MN, David (Kate) Safstrom of Corydon, IN, Heather Crowe of Charleston, S.C., Dusty Liston of Winona, MN; grandchildren-Zoey, Piper, Liberty, Lauryn, Rylie, Taylor and Hunter; great grandchildren-Paxtyn and Huxley; sister-Beverly (Steve) Smoot of Midland, MI; brother-Michael (Cathie) Martin of Westville, IN; sisters-in-law-Cheryl Neff of Pueblo West, CO, Sandy (Luis) Cuellar of Valparaiso, IN; brothers-in-law-Jasen Faust and Paul Rykiel of Chicago, IL; nine nieces and nephews; many great nieces, nephews and cousins.

Visitation for Rhonda will be held Friday, August 18, 2023, from 10:00 a.m., until time of Mass of Christian Burial at 12:00 p.m., at Nativity of our Savior Catholic Church, 2929 Willowcreek Road, Portage, Rev. Kevin McCarthy officiating. Interment at Calvary Cemetery, Portage, IN. Burns Funeral Home (Hobart) entrusted with arrangements. [www.burnsfuneral.com](http://www.burnsfuneral.com).

# Cemetery Details

## Calvary Cemetery

2701 Willowdale Road  
Portage, IN 46368

# Previous Events

## Visitation

AUG 18. 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

Nativity of Our Savior Church  
2949 Willowcreek Road  
Portage, IN 46368  
<http://2949>

## Mass of Christian Burial

AUG 18. 12:00 PM (CT)

Nativity of Our Savior Church  
2949 Willowcreek Road  
Portage, IN 46368  
<http://2949>

# Tribute Wall



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Rhonda L Safstrom.*



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August 17, 2023 at 09:50 AM



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

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August 17, 2023 at 09:50 AM



“ *Rhonda and I went from 1st to 12th grade together. We always had a healthy competition in grade school whether for the science fair, spelling bee, choir and athletics, we pushed each other to be better. I remember stopping to pick her up and walk with her to grade school. She always knew what she wanted and strived to make it happen, ie the valedictorian of our senior class. My parents would go have dinner at the place on Portage on route 20 that she worked at and request her section and visit with her and keep up with how her schooling was going. I reached out to her and reconnected through Facebook and was able to visit with her last summer and catch up. It was a pleasure and I will cherish that memory and the smile she left me with. You are now pain free my friend. RIP*

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**Roberta “bobbee” Miller Clawson** - August 16, 2023 at 08:49 PM

LE

“ *Lloyd & Kedo Erpelding lit a candle in memory of Rhonda L Safstrom*



Lloyd & kedo Erpelding - August 16, 2023 at 02:16 PM

LE

*Sorry to read that Dave's mother has passed, You are in our thoughts & prayers.. You have our sincere sympathy.*

Lloyd & kedo Erpelding - August 16, 2023 at 02:17 PM



“ *Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Rhonda L Safstrom.*



August 16, 2023 at 12:15 PM



“ *Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Rhonda L Safstrom.*



August 16, 2023 at 11:57 AM

AZ

“ I worked at Morton with Rhonda for more than 30 years and enjoyed our times together . We shared many stories of our families and students during that time. My sympathies to all of her children, grandchildren and family. I know she will be missed by many.  
*Andrea Ziemba*

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**Andrea Ziemba** - August 16, 2023 at 11:44 AM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket* was purchased for the family of Rhonda L Safstrom.



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August 16, 2023 at 11:19 AM

PC

“ So sorry for your loss. She was such a wonderful, kind and helpful nurse at SCH. May she be blessed for the loving care she gave to her fellow staff and children who were entrusted under her care. She was a bright and shining star.

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**Patti Casella** - August 15, 2023 at 07:56 PM



“ *Ocean Breeze Spray* was purchased for the family of Rhonda L Safstrom.



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August 15, 2023 at 05:38 PM



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

August 15, 2023 at 05:38 PM



“ My deepest condolences to the family. I have worked with Rhonda for 10 years now and enjoyed venting with her. She really was a kind person with a beautiful heart. May she rest in peace knowing that she was loved by many.

Pamela Otero, MSN, RN - August 15, 2023 at 02:31 PM



“ So sorry to hear this I knew Rhonda threw softball and basketball with our girls she was a great lady had a lot of good times and. Laughs she will be missed dearly praying for her family to God give them strength at this time Ilove the Korbars

Linda Korbar - August 15, 2023 at 12:41 PM



“ Prayers and thoughts for ALL of Rhonda's family 😞 I sure will miss her but we shared so many good times growing up together 😊 and had a great visit the other day 🙏🙏

Laura Vizena - August 15, 2023 at 10:17 AM



My deepest condolences to the family. I worked with Rhonda in Health Services for School City of Hammond. I am so sorry to hear of your loss. May God Bless Ashley, Emily and Arthur. Sharon Daily Retired EMT

Shaton K. Daily - August 15, 2023 at 12:36 PM

MF

*to a great person who loved her job here at SCH, she will be missed. RIP Rhonda.*

Mark Fetzko - August 15, 2023 at 02:36 PM

HL

*My thoughts and prayers go out to all of Rhonda's family. It was a pleasure knowing you for all of these years at SCH. You will be missed. Rest in heaven Rhonda.*

Heather Lozano - August 15, 2023 at 03:35 PM

EV

*My deepest condolences to her family that she loved so much and spoke about often. I was honored to be her health aide for many years as she taught me so much! She was truly a unique soul with a big heart that will be greatly missed, by those that knew her! May you rest in Heaven my dearest friend!*

Erika Vazquez - August 15, 2023 at 08:20 PM

RA

*I wish I would have stayed with you in 1979*

Randy - August 17, 2023 at 07:50 PM

RA

*Rest in peace*

Randy - August 17, 2023 at 07:51 PM



*I've known Rhonda from 1st. grade (1965) until graduation.... and when she was a young mother; so I was so glad when we reconnected. Seeing her photo makes me miss her so much more. Her kindness, joy, and good spirit made a difference in my life. My pain to not have her accessible be difficult beyond words. God grant you a blessed rest, my beloved friend. I will always love you and cherish your memory.*

George Dean - August 20, 2023 at 01:04 AM

JE

*Thoughts and prayers to the entire family on your loss. She fought a great fight and may god grant everyone peace. We will miss her at SCH.*

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**Jeanette** - August 20, 2023 at 01:05 PM