

REMEMBERING GINI

Virginia Ann Linsenmeyer, lover of birthdays, babies, and holidays, died peacefully at her home on Friday, February 26th, 2021.

Never without a camera, Gini was capturing life's ordinary and extraordinary moments and sharing them with family, friends and strangers long before Mark Zuckerberg was in diapers. She was a familiar face for years at Sam's Club and Walmart, printing thousands of photos to share with those she loved. You would get your picture taken by Gini whether you liked it or not. It was easier to grin and bear it rather than ask whether one more picture was really necessary.

The men in her life were numerous (4 brothers, 3 sons, 8 grandsons). She particularly fancied smart, tall, ruggedly handsome men with big hearts. She loved her father, Gerard Marks, and inherited his upbeat, warm outlook on life.

She adored her four younger brothers; Jerry (deceased), Joe, Johnny and Jimmy, who in return, worshipped their beautiful, kind, older sister.

Gini surrounded herself with strong, determined women. Her mother (Virginia Marks) and grandmother (Virginia McNally) were memorable forces of nature. They shared their can-do spirit and zest for life with Gini and Gini's favorite sister Patti.

Gini married her main squeeze, the tall,, dark handsome Jim Linsenmeyer, in 1966. She was his "Tiger" and volleyball partner. "Flight and Gini" were a fabulous duo both on and off the volleyball court. They enjoyed traveling, bike riding, and just being together. They didn't need special occasions to enjoy each other's company. Gini and Jim shared their recipe for a happy marriage with their children. Only five simple ingredients needed: love, friendship, romance, respect, and devotion.

Gini and Jim raised their four children; Mary Ellen (Augusta, GA), Mike (Columbia, MD) , John (Columbia, MD) and Tommy (deceased) in West Laurel, MD.

Gini took her homemaking responsibilities as a wife and mother seriously. Her home was filled with love and laughter and always decorated joyfully for each holiday. Gini believed passionately that you could never have enough hand towels announcing the current holiday season. Stopping by on any random day, you could usually find a birthday cookie cake baking in the oven which would need to be delivered to her friend's uncle's brother's cousin. Once you were on Gini's list of loved ones, you stayed on forever. The list was long and grew longer and longer as time went by.

Gini was an enthusiastic joiner and a do-er. Garden club (stroll through almost any garden with Gini and she could identify just about any flower), book club (we don't believe she ever actually read the books, but she certainly listened to almost every book on tape while driving), and TASTE (her Recipe/Bible study group) were just a few of her many activities that kept her busy and on the go.

Gini was a competitor. Her family would tease her that she was sugar and spice on the outside, but her angelic smile was deceptive as she whipped your tail on the basketball court (watch the *Mighty Macks* movie if you'd like to get an idea of what Gini's basketball career at Immaculata College was like), the tennis court (she took pride in her ability to make accurate close calls on "out balls"), or at the table playing Sequence. Gini did not like to lose. She proudly passed on her feisty, tenacious competitiveness to all of her children and grandkids. She thoroughly enjoyed attending her grandkids' events including soccer games, tennis matches, swim meets, lacrosse games and races.

Gini was a grandmother. Her greatest blessings called her Gigi. Joe, John Morgan, Johnny, Katy, J.T., Jimmy, Luca, Siena, Matt, and Marco were Gigi's treasured bright stars. If you had a minute, she didn't mind casually mentioning their latest, greatest achievements or the most recent brilliant, funny, insightful thing they had said. The love was mutual. Her grandkids knew they were blessed to have hit the grandma jackpot with Gigi. The enduring gifts she leaves them are the importance of faith in God and an example of how to adventurously live life to the fullest.

Gini was a friend. If you met Gini and only spent a few minutes in her presence, you came away with the realization you had just made a new friend. Happiness, a sense of peace and the warmth of acceptance are what you felt when you were in Gini's company. It is hard to put into words how much she loved and devoted herself to her family and friends.

Gini was a survivor. A lifelong struggle with lupus, a broken pelvis (riding a racing bike like a dare devil on the paths of Columbia with her grandchildren), a broken neck, three years of caring for her husband Jim following his stroke, and most recently, a difficult battle with cancer were all trials Gini gracefully endured without complaint. The most painful part of her life's journey was losing her sweet son Tommy. Gini put on a very brave face for almost twenty years. She carried her grief in a place that wasn't seen by the world. She didn't share her burden with others but made a decision to joyfully embrace life and those around her.

We know she was welcomed Home by Jesus, Jim and Tommy this past Friday. We imagine she is quite busy and excited to be reconnecting with countless friends and family members in Heaven. But we will miss our Mrs. Claus. We will miss the grandma who could fill a room with sunshine while playing her player piano and singing out of key with her grandkids. We will miss the one-of-a-kind gal who always made each of us feel loved and special. We will miss our beautiful mom, Gigi, sister, sister-in-law, mother-in-law, aunt, great-aunt and friend.

We will miss the sweet lady behind the camera who could always make us smile.

REMEMBERING GIGI

Good Morning. My name is Joe Linsenmeyer. I am Gini's oldest grandchild.

Gigi and I experienced many adventures together. Some planned and others accidental. One such adventure occurred when I was in third grade and Gigi drove me to my school in Baltimore. I know what you are thinking... wait Joe, going to school is not much of an adventure and for most people that would be true, but not with Gigi.

Gigi wasn't sure if we should take Route 70 West or East, so she asked me. Well, in third grade, numbers and letters were difficult for me but putting them together and reading a fleeting road sign from the backseat, forget it! I could barely walk around the block at the time and not get lost. So, I just pointed to a random sign not really thinking about it.

Looking back now, I know we were supposed to take 70 East towards Baltimore but we ended up taking 70 West. It took Gigi and I quite a long time to realize our mistake. Not seeing tall skyscrapers but dark green hills and cows and coming upon the city of Frederick, we eventually figured out our mistake.

It was the blind happily driving the blind you might say. Gigi being Gigi treated me to a warm sweet Cinnabon at Burger King before turning around and heading back to Baltimore. It was my all-time favorite ride to school even if it took almost 2 hours.

Gigi might not have been very good at North, South, East, and West directions, but, her compass and the compass she shared with her grandchildren was the compass of "L, O, V, E".

Gigi's "L" stood for Listen and Laugh. She loved to talk but she was the best listener. With her grandchildren, she always seemed really interested in whatever we were talking about even if it was the most

boring subject. There wasn't any one more important in the world when you were chatting with each other. Her laugh was one of my favorite sounds and it is one of the most memorable things about her for me and my cousins. Even when she was wearing a halo after she broke her neck, she could still find something fun to laugh about with us.

Gigi's "O" stood for "Open Your Heart". As many of you know, Gigi always opened her heart to others. The countless small and big acts of kindness she showed me and others, strangers included, truly added sunshine to our days. It is a quality that my cousins and I hope to keep alive in Gigi's memory.

Gigi's "V" on her compass was Value. Value and cherish the ones you love. She knew our time on earth is precious and shouldn't be wasted on the small things. You always knew how much she cared about all of us.

Lastly, Gigi's "E" was Enjoy Life. Gigi was the best at that. Even though she lost Pop Pop and Tommy, she still enjoyed life. She climbed the massive mountain peak of Whiteface at the age of 72. She went down the Humunga Kawabunga with her grandkids (a crazy steep wedgie inducing waterslide) at Disney World. I am sure she was the only person in her 60s in the line that day.

I will miss Gigi more than you can imagine. She was my best friend. But I am grateful Gigi left me and my cousins a special compass we could use for the rest of our lives. It will guide us and help us navigate the years ahead.

Gigi had no doubts that she would see Tommy and Pop Pop again. It was as if they had a head start on a beautiful vacation and she would catch up to them and join them later. Like Gigi, I have faith in God that we will see her again but for now I am grateful to have a guardian angel with a real halo watching over me and my cousins.



Celebration of Life



Virginia Ann Linsenmeyer

Born to Life January 10, 1946
Born to Eternal Life February 26, 2021

March 3, 2021
St. Mary of the Mills, Laurel, MD



