



Lea C. Downer

August 9, 1922 - April 21, 2013

Hampton – Lea C. Downer, 90, died Sunday, April 21, 2013 at the Rockingham Nursing Home in Brentwood.

She was born in Southbridge, MA August 9, 1922 a daughter of the late Peter and Catherine (Polack) Norowski.

A well-known Hampton resident for many years, she owned and operated several Hampton Beach businesses, including the Moulton Hotel, the Renwood Restaurant and Gift Shop, and Lea's Tea Room.

Lea was also active in church and community affairs. She was a communicant of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal Parish and a member and past president of the Catholic Women's Club; and a member and past president of the Hampton Democratic Organization and an elections poll worker for many years.

She was the widow of former Hampton Post Master, George S. Downer, who died in 1983. Lea was also predeceased by her son, James Downer, in 2007 and grandson, Matt Downer, in 2006.

Family members include her son, George "Skip" Downer, and his wife, Carol of Hampton; daughter, Cynthia Legacy of Manchester; two grandsons, Scott Downer, and his wife, Michelle of Sudbury, MA and Ryan Downer, and his wife, Patricia of Wolfeboro; two great grandchildren Aidan and Madeline; a brother, Roger Norowski, and his wife, Nancy of Southbridge, MA; a sister, Isabel Augustinus of Trenton, FL; two sisters-in-law, Mary Norowski of Agawam, MA and Martha Norowski of Memphis, TN; and many nieces and

nephews.

A tribute to my mother:

“Because I’m your Mother” – these 4 simple, eloquent words were all my mom, Lea Downer, had to say to get her point across to me that any further discussion was unnecessary.

Mom had no time to spend on worry and sorrow – she managed to use all of her spiritual energy focused on one thing – others. What a gift she was to all of us! Her waking moments were spent focusing on chances to help others – she was very perceptive. You could confide ANY confidence to her – and she would NEVER betray your trust.

Recently we have had a great need for FIRST RESPONDERS. In her life, in every opportunity, Mom wanted to reach out and comfort someone - she was the original “first responder”. In her 90 years, 8 months and 12 days here that was her mission.

In recent months, Mom was told that certain people at Rockingham County Nursing Home were being asked to take a \$1 an hour reduction in pay. Her response, “that’s OK, I’ll make sure that the administrator is willing to do the same thing.” She could see fairness with 20-20 clarity.

Recently she noticed the 4 parking spaces near the front door at RCNH that are reserved for County Commissioners. Word to the board: with all due respect, Mom feels these could be put to better use as parking spots for your “EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH” which should be no problem to establish.

In another typical example of seeing an opportunity to show a kindness to someone else, Mom befriended a man who has been a long time resident. You can ALWAYS find him by the wide screen TV, or near a radio when the Red Sox are on. Seeing this, she thought that maybe he would enjoy having a Red Sox shirt. We had been talking this over since last summer. This spring I found a really nice one that we thought he’d enjoy wearing. I showed up on a Saturday morning and we went out around the facility – he moves around a

lot. Mom was really excited about this. We stopped him in the hall and she greeted him with “Hey Mike, I have a surprise for you!” I held up the shirt, and Mom explained how she knows he is a true Sox fan and seemed to never miss a game and “here’s a shirt you can wear when you watch”. He looked at the shirt, then at Mom, and said, “thank you – I’m a Yankee fan!.... I only watch the Sox because that’s what is on!” We really had a good laugh – HE KEPT THE SHIRT.

As for the caring staff at RCNH – Mom loved the staff. We are fortunate to have such a facility nearby. Thanks to all there who cared for my mother. Yesterday, going through some of Mom’s personal items that she kept in her travel bag on the back of her wheelchair, I discovered another little surprise. In her little purse, I discovered some very beautiful prayer beads, and two other things – Governor John Lynch’s personal phone number, and 2 doggie treats – just in case she encountered any visiting pets in her travels. Here were indications of 3 things that meant so much to her – her faith, a chance to please one of God’s creatures, and POLITICS.

As people achieve greater levels of longevity, you hear things like “usually they outlive their friends and family, and are alone at the end”. There was no way that this could ever happen with Mom because she made a new friend every time she met someone. In fact, if there is a way for her to get folks together where she is now it certainly must be happening.

I have a mission for all of you who knew Lea – PLEASE TAKE a flower and promise Lea that in the next day or so you will give it to SOMEONE YOU HAVE NEVER MET, or a neighbor you barely know.... GIVE THAT PERSON THIS FLOWER ... and if you cannot think of the right words or a reason – just say it came from a friend... You will be telling the truth.

Tribute Wall



“ *Lea C. Downer*

September 18, 2022 at 12:49 AM



“ *Penny Alexander RCNH lit a candle in memory of Lea C. Downer*



Penny Alexander RCNH - June 20, 2013 at 07:13 AM



“ *I was the Ombudsman at Rockingham for two years. The first face I remember seeing is Lea's, smiling at me across the dining room. We kept eye contact as I walked up. I introduced myself, and she said to me, "All you need to do here is smile that smile!" Each time I visited I touched base with Lea first because she kept me believing in what I was doing. When she wanted the Governor to visit Rockingham, we didn't give up until it happened. Wahoo! I know that Lea continues to spread her grace wherever she is. I love you too, Lea!!! And I miss you.*

Holly Whiteside - May 08, 2013 at 09:08 AM

SD

“ *Lea was a very special lady and will be dearly missed here at RCNH. She was smart, generous and always dignified. She was always compassionate with the other residents. As her caregiver I felt a genuine affection and interest in myself from her. She asked what is going on in my life and offered her good advice on relationships, beauty, cooking and of course politics. She shared her many experiences with me and gave in many small ways. Thank you Lea and may you rest in peace.*

Sandra Divver - May 08, 2013 at 09:07 AM

PA

“ *Goodbye my Friend Though we never know Where life will take us, I know it's just a ride On the wheel. And we never know When death will shake us And we wonder how It will feel. So Goodbye my friend. I know I'll never see you again. But the time together Through all the years, Will take away these tears, It's OK now-Goodbye my friend. I see a lot of things That make me crazy, And I guess I held on to you, You could have run away And left-well maybe, But it wasn't time And we both knew. So Goodbye my Friend. I know I'll never see you again. But the friendship you gave me Through all the years Will take away these tears. I'm OK now- Goodbye my FRIEND. Love ya Lea, may you rest in peace ..*

Penny Alexander - May 08, 2013 at 09:07 AM

JL

“ *I was so sad to hear of lea passing. I work at RCNH and Lea helped make DI a friendly place. She was always helping other residents, we will miss her.Its so nice that she has a loving family, and friends, our heart felt prayers go out to everyone who loved Lea*

Jill Letourneau - May 08, 2013 at 09:07 AM

TF

“ We are so sorry for your lose. She is in heaven with all her friends and famliy. So many memories of all the good times shared with her. RIP Jack Simon & Family

The Simon Family - May 08, 2013 at 09:07 AM

EK

“ Thank you Nana for opening your arms and heart to our family when we lived so far from home. You will always be in our hearts. Skip, Carol, Scott and Michelle, so sorry for your loss. With Love, Ellen (Peterson) Kahn and Family

Ellen Kahn - May 08, 2013 at 09:06 AM

CO

“ A wonderful lady of the first order. Beautiful, inside and out, with a kind heart. Deepest condolences to the family.

Carol O'Leary - May 08, 2013 at 09:06 AM

ET

“ We were dear friends and I loved to see her on Thurs. The picture of her made me weep as that is exactly how I remember her. Her light of love, goodness, and serenity inspired everyone.

Ellie Thompson - May 08, 2013 at 09:06 AM

LJ

“ SKIP CAROL AND FAMILY, MY DEEPEST SYMPATHYS TO YOU ALL. I LOVED LEA AND KNEW HER FOR SEVERAL YEARS. A VERY LOVING, SWEET KIND AND CARING PERSON. I SHALL MISS YOU LEA. REST IN PEACE LOVE LENNY

lenny joubert - May 08, 2013 at 09:05 AM

PE

“ My sincere sympathy to Lea's family. I knew Lea through pulmonary exercise group. She made me feel like family from the minute I met her and she has been in my thoughts almost daily since my health had precluded me from being in contact with her for some time. Please know that Lea was a shining light in so many lives and very much loved by everyone who ever met her. My thoughts and prayers are with you all.

Patricia Edgerly - May 08, 2013 at 09:05 AM

SK

“ Mom, I miss you terribly! I am blessed to have had you here so long. My heart is broken - thoughts of you will help me keep it together. You are wisdom and kindness affected everyone who ever met you. Even at 90 you could never outlive the people you affected because until your final day if you met someone they felt a friend... because that was you Mom. I love you. Skip.

Skip - May 08, 2013 at 09:05 AM

TS

“ Please know you are in our thoughts and prayers. Your Mom was a beautiful person, inside and out, and she will be missed by many. The Town of Hampton has lost a treasure.

Ted and Joyce Sharples - May 08, 2013 at 09:05 AM

MW

“ Skip and Cindy, you have our deepest sympathy for the loss of your Mother, Lea. Aunty Lea was so generous to us by opening up her home to my family for our annual summer vacations. I have fond memories of my time with her and in New Hampshire still to this day. She was a classy woman, and one of my role models. She made the world a better place.

Mary Wenninger - May 08, 2013 at 09:04 AM