



Sara A. Maher

July 6, 1933 - July 13, 2022

Sara A. Maher, age 89, passed away July 13, 2022. Sara - or Sarge - as her siblings and numerous nieces and nephews called her, was born in Detroit, Michigan, July 6, 1933. Sara was one of eleven children born to David Maher and Catherine (Sarsfield) Maher. Sara is predeceased by her parents and brothers Michael Maher, Patrick Maher, Leo Maher, Timothy Maher, Basil Maher and sisters Rita Clink and Mary Brennan. She is survived by her sisters Rose Gardner and Veronica Long and brother Gerald Maher and twenty-seven (27) nieces and nephews and numerous grand-nieces and grand-nephews.

Sara was born and raised in a strong Irish family and during her early years resided with her parents and siblings in the Emmett, Michigan area. She attended and graduated from Yale High School. Sara, like most of her siblings, worked at various jobs during her early teen years to help support the family. In her mid-through late teens, she worked at several jobs in the Port Huron, Mount Clemens area.

In January of 1956, at age 22, Sara was working for Michigan Bell Telephone Co. as a telephone operator in Detroit, when her mother was killed in an auto accident. With four younger siblings (Rose, Veronica, Basil and Jerry) living in the Emmett area and her father working and staying in Detroit 6 days a week, Sara stepped forward to assume the role of primary matriarch for her four younger siblings. Fortunately, she was able to retain her job with Michigan Bell and transfer to the Michigan Bell Port Huron office.

Sara's dependability, eagerness to learn, reliability, compassion for others and leadership qualities were soon recognized by her peers and co-workers and she "rose in the ranks" within the Michigan Bell organization. During the mid 50's to mid 60's, Sara assumed supervisory positions and became the Office Manager in the Port Huron office. At the same time - she was also "supervising" those younger siblings through their teen years. That's when she acquired the nickname "Sarge" primarily from the friends and peers of those siblings. In addition to helping financially with her siblings while advancing in her employment, Sarge kept a pretty close eye on her younger siblings, to ensure they were on a path leading to independence and responsibility. And most of all, she did so by example.

Over the next 30 years, Michigan Bell transformed into Ameritech and ultimately, AT&T. The telecommunications industry was rapidly changing, and Sara, being the valued employee she was, transformed with it. Her employer recognized her skills and talents as a manager of people and a bridge between management and workers. These were particularly stressful times as technology was displacing telephone operators and "downsizing" was occurring. Sara was assigned numerous office locations in Michigan during this period to assist in making that transition. Offices she managed included Grand Rapids, Jackson and the Detroit metropolitan area. She lived in Port Huron, then Grand Rapids, then Novi, during these years but, also had to travel many other places including New York City and San Francisco for multiple month assignments.

Sara retired from AT&T in 1989 and purchased a home in Rogers City, Michigan, on the shores of Lake Huron, with a deck that overlooked a beautiful city park. Her home in Rogers City, was the gathering place for many of her siblings and their children (Sara's nieces and nephews) during the summer and fall months. Overnight and weeklong stays at Sargies' Rogers City home was "the place to be" for many nieces and nephews and their parents during the summer and particularly during the fall festival and parade. Sara also had a winter house in Avon Park, Florida for a number of years,

which she occupied during the winter months and hosted many friends and family members from the North, during those northern grey November - February days.

Sara was active in many civic groups while in Rogers City. She enjoyed company and many friends she went on walks with and enjoyed playing cards with, during the 29 years she lived there. In the fall of 2018, she moved from Rogers City to an assisted living facility in Fort Gratiot, Michigan to be nearer to her siblings, nieces and nephews. She again made easy friends and enjoyed playing cards and participating in activities.

Tribute Wall

ET

“ I worked for a time at the senior living facility (Mercy Village) that Sara lived in for several years. Even in spite of her difficulties communicating she loved to look at photos of her loved ones, read along to their old cards and letters, and listen to music. She loved looking at pictures and videos of my 3 cats and I felt a strong bond with Sara. She had a great sense of humor and would sometimes wave me goodbye and say "Adios!" Or "I love you"! She was a joy to be around and to care for. She greatly appreciated and enjoyed practicing self care, like wearing lotion, soaking her feet, styling her hair and dressing nice. I felt a bond with our shared love of animals, strong sense of love and commitment to our families (I also have no children) and a desire for independence. I'm so happy and blessed to have gotten to know Sara. Bless her and bless her family for helping her transition to a place where she can truly know peace. Thank you for giving me a chance to know her.

Emily Custer La Tulip - August 05, 2022 at 01:58 PM

SH

“ Veronica, Bill, Rose and the rest of the family It was our HONOR and PRIVILEGE to have Sara as our neighbor, but more so, our beloved friend.
I have missed her every day since she moved to Fort Gratiot and thought of her EVERY SINGLE day. Our thoughts and prayers are with your family as this time. Love, Bill and Sally Halsey

Sally Anne Halsey - July 21, 2022 at 11:00 PM

“*My Aunt Sara – Aunt Sargie – was an incredibly influential and beloved member of our family. Sargie always had a big house and an even bigger heart. While she never married or had children, she purchased large homes with plenty of room for family to visit. She was a mother figure to many in her life, especially those nieces and nephews who never got to know a grandmother. Friends and family would gather at her home to enjoy dinners or a game of cards, holidays or summer vacations. Her lake front home in Rogers City was a favorite destination. Here Sara enjoyed a full house of family during the annual Nautical Fest. She would walk with her grand nieces and nephews in the Children’s Parade and share adventures on the walking trails, the beach, or near-by Ocqueoc Falls.*

For a number of years, Sara and her sisters, nieces and great-nieces would make an annual trip to Stratford, Ontario, to the annual Shakespeare Festival. Sara and her sisters reminisced about their childhood, sharing memories and passing along stories to the next generation.

Aunt Sargie loved Irish music. She also enjoyed Johnny Cash, Willie Nelson, Charlie Pride, folk music, games of Euchre, the daily paper, and Tiger baseball. She enjoyed live music and the theater. She liked her coffee black. She loved her sister, Veronica’s rhubarb pie, and her sister, Rose’s bread and butter pickles. Nothing was better than a home-grown tomato and sweet corn. She loved crab cakes, too. She was an avid gardener and enjoyed sharing slips of her perennials with those who stopped to talk to her about her flowers. She especially loved living near the water and watching the freighters go by and the storms roll in.

Sara will be missed by those who were blessed to know and love her. It was sad to see her fade as her dementia advanced. She was a gentle spirit with pluck and determination. She was a self-made, independent woman who commanded respect. We all learned so much from her. Her friends and family will carry her forever in their hearts. She will be missed.

Kathleen (Long) Beckman

Kathleen Beckman - July 20, 2022 at 12:39 PM

DG

“ *We are going to miss you Aunt Sargie. You were always there for your family in many ways and especially big ol' bear hugs. We love you. Dan and Debbie*

Debbie Greenia - July 18, 2022 at 05:06 PM