



Ellen Loraine Heinichen (Butler)

September 4, 1949 - May 28, 2026

Ellen Loraine Heinichen (Butler), age 76 of South Haven, passed away on Thursday, May 28, 2026, at Bronson Methodist Hospital in Kalamazoo, MI. She was born on September 4, 1949, to Lewis and Donna Butler (Wilkinson) in South Haven, Michigan. She was the youngest of 3 children, with a brother, David, and a sister, Marilyn. Ellen grew up and lived her entire life in the Bangor/South Haven area. She graduated from Bangor High School in 1967. Ellen was a hard worker who took pride in all her jobs, from working at Everett Piano Company to welding at Haworth, and finally, following her sisters' footsteps, she became a United States postal worker, where she served as a rural route carrier until her retirement in 2019.

Ellen had 3 daughters to whom she devoted her time, ensuring they were always supported, happy, and loved. Ellen loved watching basketball, being outdoors in warm weather, watching "her birds," going to the casino with friends, last-minute shopping trips, and spending time with her 2 cats, Louie & Weezy. But most of all, she enjoyed being "Grandma Ellen" to her 3 wonderful grandchildren, Devin, Tyler, and Leeanne, and her 1 great-grandson, Eric. Ellen will be deeply missed by all who knew her, and they will find comfort in knowing she is now home and at peace with the Lord, her savior. John 3:16 "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Surviving are her 3 daughters, Tali (Dennis) Sorenson, Holly (Todd) Mielke, and Renée (Andrew) Gossman; grandsons Devin Sorenson and Tyler (Olivia) Mielke; granddaughter LEEANNE (Yamil) Mielke; and 1 great-grandson, Eric. Also surviving are brother David (Rita) Butler and nieces Jennifer (Tim) and Lori (Jason). Ellen is preceded in death by her father, Lewis Butler; her mother, Donna Butler; and her sister, Marilyn Geier (Butler).

Per her wishes, cremation has taken place, and a celebration of life will be held at a later date. Arrangements are entrusted to the Bangor Chapel of D.L. Miller Funeral Home (www.dlmillerfuneralhome.com).

Cemetery Details

Cremation

Events

Details are pending.

Tribute Wall

TF

“ Tali, Holly and Renee ,
Our family is saddened to hear of your mom's passing. We have such great memories of her through the years. Hugs and prayers for you girls.

Tom and Judy Gardner Family - June 15 at 10:17 PM

KM

“ Ken And Rose Morrison lit a candle in memory of Ellen Loraine Heinichen (Butler)



Ken and Rose Morrison - June 01 at 05:13 PM

RG

Thank you

Renee Gossman - June 01 at 06:33 PM

NW

“ A beautiful Person, Great a 4-H Mother and A Friend to all. Ellen is special....

Nancy Whaley - May 31 at 10:08 AM

RG

She always enjoyed doing 4-H days at your house, the sewing, the nature walks with the big dogs, the pool parties.
She always liked you, thank you for your kind words Nancy.

Renee Gossman - May 31 at 07:16 PM

SR

“ *Im very sorry for your sudden loss of your wonderful mom, Holly & family. Smile for her, cry for you. Until you meet again, and you will. It will be a fantastic reunion! Hugs!!!* 📿❤️📿❤️
Love you, Sue R



Sue Rawson - May 30 at 08:07 PM

RG

Thank you Sue for such kind, honest words. We know she is truly home now. But will forever be missed by us all.

Renee Gossman - May 31 at 07:17 PM

PH

“ *So sorry to hear we have lost yet another part of the Wood School family. Ellen was a mother and grandmother to students at Wood School for many years. Her home across the street was literally a place for the students to take shelter in a storm. I didn't talk with Ellen often but I knew when she spoke she was saying something worth listening to. Her daughters and grandchildren are a testament to the positive influence she had on their lives and they can be grateful for the time well spent with her.*

God Bless.

Peggy Harden

Peggy Harden - May 30 at 12:31 PM

RG

Thank you so much Peggy, the Wood School community is definitely a great one. I know she was proud to be a part of it and raise us up their. I appreciate your kind words.

Renee Gossman - May 31 at 07:20 PM

JR

“ *Judy Rainey lit a candle in memory of Ellen Loraine Heinichen (Butler)*



Judy Rainey - May 30 at 07:43 AM

RG

Thank you Judy

Renee Gossman - May 31 at 07:21 PM

RL

“ *Ellen & I became good friends 55 years ago when we worked together at Everett Piano Company. We were neighbors while our kids were growing up. Ellen was a great friend that I will never forget. She played a major role in my decision to ask Jesus into my heart. I am completely confident & comforted to know that she is with our Lord in Heaven now. Hugs to all her family.*

Renee Lute - May 30 at 06:06 AM

RG

*Thank you Renee for being one of her best friends throughout her life, she always loved you. She even named one of her kids after you 😊
Thank you for being here for us back when we were kids and now. We know she is rejoicing in Heaven and is at peace.*

Renee Gossman - May 31 at 07:25 PM

RB

“ *Ellen will be greatly missed by me this summer. We spent a lot of time together during summer and when we lived in Michigan.*



Rita Butler - May 29 at 07:20 PM

RG

She definitely loved you Aunt Rita. We are all going to miss her so much. But I know she's as happy as can be up in Heaven.

Renee Gossman - May 31 at 07:28 PM

VO

“ *Ellen and I were co-grandmas. We enjoyed talking at Tyler and Liv's wedding just 13 days ago. You always knew where you stand with Ellen. A wonderful woman. Will miss her!*

Vicki Olson - May 29 at 05:59 PM

RG

Thank you Vicki, she definitely loved be grandma Ellen, thats for sure. I'm so glad everyone got to hang out at the wedding, it was definitely a special day.

Renee Gossman - May 31 at 07:32 PM

LS

“ *Lacey Sager sent a virtual gift in memory of Ellen Loraine Heinichen (Butler)*



Lacey Sager - May 29 at 05:21 PM

RG

*Thank you Lacey.
Reester bunnies forever.*

Renee Gossman - May 31 at 07:30 PM

BM

“ *Brenda Mead lit a candle in memory of Ellen
Loraine Heinichen (Butler)*



Brenda Mead - May 29 at 05:07 PM

RG

Thank you Brenda

Renee Gossman - May 31 at 07:28 PM