



# Jacqueline Rae Wheeler

February 3, 1943 - April 24, 2026

Jacqueline Rae Wheeler

Professor • Artisan • Mother • Friend

Jacqueline Rae Wheeler, beloved mother, grandmother, sister, and friend, passed away peacefully April 24, 2026 at the age of 83.

Born February 3, 1943 in Fort Riley, Kansas, Jacki's life was guided by a deep compassion for others, an unshakable curiosity, and an abiding love for the natural world. She devoted much of her professional life to preparing the next generation of nurses as a Professor of Nursing at Ferris State University, where her warmth, expertise, and mentorship touched the lives of countless students and colleagues.

Outside the classroom, Jacki had an unquenchable creative spirit that she expressed as an artisan; over the years, she loved knitting, spinning her own wool, felting, jewelry making, needlework, nature photography and more. She had a strong sense of nesting, always dreaming up new interior design projects for her inside of her home, and growing flowers and shrubs she was constantly tending. She found great peace in watching the birds, and was one of the local favorites as her feeders were filled generously.

Jacki took great pride as a mother and grandmother to her two daughters

(Lauren and Elizabeth Klein) and her four grandchildren. She was the quintessential big sister to Douglas Wheeler and Lori Smith; Lori provided endless support and companionship over the years. She was an endless source of stories and advice, sometimes bluntly asking the hard questions, but always keenly interested in the happenings with her family.

We are happy her pain and suffering with dementia has ended. She will be remembered as a fiercely independent woman who was proud, often adventurous, and never shy with her opinions. At her request there will be no services, instead a celebration of Jacki's life will be held in Kalamazoo, Michigan in July. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Jacqueline R. Wheeler Scholarship Fund to support nursing students interested in dementia and other caregiving: <https://www.michigannursesfoundation.org/jacqueline-r-wheeler-scholarship>

## Cemetery Details

**Cremation**

## Events

**Details are pending.**