



## F. Isabelle Whalen

June 23, 1919 - September 2, 2020

F. Isabelle Whalen, 101, of Pittsfield, died Wednesday evening, September 2, 2020, at Side by Side Assisted Living Facility in Pittsfield, where she had been a resident since 2015.

She was born in Adams on June 23, 1919, a daughter of the late Charles and Ethel (McConnell) Whalen. She graduated from the former Adams High School in 1938. She attended North Adams State College, and studied Business Law at Berkshire Community College.

She was employed at General Electric Co. in Pittsfield for 40 years as an executive legal secretary until retiring in 1982. Isabelle remained active in sports and charitable organizations well into her 90's.

Isabelle was a sports enthusiast and loved tennis. She was a long time tournament player at the General Electric Athletic Association, and was also the Women's Singles Champion for many years, as well as serving on the Board of Directors at the GEAA for 12 years. She enjoyed hiking, and was a member of the Adirondack and Taconic Hiking Clubs, and the Appalachian Mountain Club. She hiked all over New England, and took several trips to Switzerland as well.

Isabelle also loved music, and played the piano and clarinet. She was a member of the Berkshire Symphony Orchestra. She enjoyed snowshoeing and skiing into her 70's, and biking into her 90's.

Isabelle volunteered at Berkshire Medical Center for many years. She learned Braille in 1966, and volunteered at Recordings for the Blind, working on a Braille typewriter translating textbooks and educational material for blind students. Also at that time, Isabelle volunteered weekly at the former Coolidge Hill School in Pittsfield, a school for physically challenged children. An avid photographer, she was a member of the Berkshire Museum Camera Club. She enjoyed taking outdoor photographs and photos of her family, including her many nieces and nephews. Isabelle enjoyed putting together wonderful slide shows, which were a regular and much anticipated activity at so many family gatherings.

She was a communicant of Sacred Heart Church, Pittsfield.

Isabelle loved her family dearly, and is survived by several nieces and nephews, and several great- and great-great nieces and nephews with whom she was very close. She

was predeceased by her two brothers, Charles Whalen of Wisconsin in 2003, and Edward P. Whalen of Adams in 2006.

Isabelle's family would like to acknowledge the wonderful care provided to her by Side by Side Assisted Living and HospiceCare in the Berkshires.

Funeral services will be private. There are no calling hours. Memorial donations may be made to HospiceCare in the Berkshires, 877 South St. Pittsfield, MA 01201.

# Comments

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“ To the Whalen and extended families,

Isabelle was a light. I appreciated her sense of humor, unwavering adoration of her family and friends, and her spirit of independence and adventure. I frequently think of her, which finds me here, albeit a month or so late. Isabelle, I hope you and J (and your beloved family members) are getting around just fine now at your home in the heavens. I will continue to think of you. Isabelle's cherished family, I send my condolences and empathy. May happy memories comfort you now and always.

Love, Brenna McGinn Ferrentino (niece of the late Jeannette Bedard)

**Brenna** - October 12, 2020 at 10:58 AM

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“ To Mike & the Whalen Family,

We're sending our sincere sympathy on the passing of Isabelle. While we didn't know her well it was obvious she was an especially dear & loving woman. How blessed you are to have had her in your lives! May she rest in peace.

Phyllis & David Middlebrook

**Phyllis Middlebrook** - September 16, 2020 at 02:00 PM

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“ To the Whalen family,

I was so sorry to hear about Isabelle's passing - she was a remarkable person, and her kindness and generosity won't be forgotten.

Keeping you all in my thoughts.

**Brooke Middlebrook** - September 15, 2020 at 12:15 PM

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“ Dear Kevin, Diane, Michael, Matt & Dan,

Sending our deepest condolences to you and the entire Whalen family. Isabelle was such a unique person, so giving, so funny, so loving . . . so many memories of her at all of the games or any activities that the kids were in at school. May her memories bring you comfort, may she fly high and watch over you until you meet again.

With love,  
The Penna's

Joan Penna - September 15, 2020 at 09:49 AM

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“ Dear Auntie Isabelle

You will always be in our hearts. I'll always treasure the special memories that we all shared-too numerous to mention but never to be forgotten. Gra' buan.

Karen Whalen - September 13, 2020 at 12:24 PM

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“ Dear Diane, Kevin & boys,

Just read of Isabelle's passing. Please accept our condolences. You were all so blessed to have her in your lives for as long as you did. I know how much she meant to all of you. What a beautiful letter Michael wrote! You both must be so proud of him. Keep all the good memories close and know we're thinking of you during this difficult time.

Sincerely, Pat and Richard Levy

Patricia M Levy - September 12, 2020 at 03:18 PM

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“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



Diane - September 12, 2020 at 08:15 AM

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“ Auntie Isabelle always made us smile. She would play the piano and sing to us. A whistler, and loved family company. We are blessed to have had her love.  
Love, Kaitlin.



**kaitlin** - September 11, 2020 at 09:46 PM

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“ Sharing our sympathies with the entire Whalen family. We all have so many fond memories of Isabelle and she was such a big part of our childhood. One of my favorite memories is spending time with Matt, Dan, Mike, and Isabelle at Papa Ginos! She was such a kind person and will be dearly missed. Much love to the Whalen's from the (Texas) Loeffel's

**Chris Loeffel** - September 10, 2020 at 09:16 AM

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“ Michael. She did so much for you and Matt and Dan. Keep the memories close to your heart.

**Eileen Charon** - September 09, 2020 at 09:47 AM

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“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



**Kevin** - September 09, 2020 at 09:08 AM

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“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



**Diane Whalen** - September 09, 2020 at 08:58 AM

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“ Isabelle truly discovered the meaning of life by being meaningful to others. She was not only dear to her friends and family, but all those people to whom she extended her warmth and generosity as a volunteer. Based on her example, I am very proud to be a "Huay-len!"

Her profound impact on finding joy in my life is immeasurable. My fondest memories of her are countless: Friday night sleepovers, weekend fun fairs, seeing plays at the Mac-Haydn theater, piano lessons and playing duets with her on the clarinet!, hiking to Rock City and Mt. Greylock, burning off the ample energy of youth at the Burger King and Dalton playgrounds, her ALWAYS having Trident gum, singing songs in the back of the car---which had the directional signal ticking CONSTANTLY!--, seeing movies at Hoyts after a contraband snack run at Hills--to be packed into the light brown back-pack!--her love of language, crossword puzzles and Scrabble!, her fondness for Ireland and her Irish heritage, "Tums for the tummy," her 16+ hour sleeper-car train trips to Wisconsin, her slide shows and prize-winning pictures, her always arriving 30 minutes early for EVERY event, and her being present at EVERY event in my life from minor league baseball, to high school soccer games and track meets, to parades to watch the Taconic High School marching band, to concert band recitals, and, especially, her homemade Fudge! (the secret recipe for which still eludes the most skilled bakers in the Whalen family!)

Even more inspiring to me than these cherished echoes from the past, are the ways in which my life has, as it turns out, has almost unconsciously evolved to parallel her own: appreciation of music, participation in sports, love of language, valuing support of friends and family, taking pride in a job well-done, and always carrying a pack of gum! When I visited Ireland last year and saw the beauty and magic of the country, I began to realize why she was so enchanted with this aspect of the Whalen family heritage.

I always used to think that my family somehow won a huge bonus by having Isabelle in addition to our loving grandparents, that every family needs an Isabelle. I feel very fortunate to have been blessed with her devotion and omnipresence.

Although I am deeply saddened by her passing, I revel in the enormity of her life and gladly will strive toward the shining example that she has set for a life successfully lived.

Isabelle, I love you.

--Michael



“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



**Michael Joseph** - September 09, 2020 at 06:30 AM

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“ Diane, Kevin, Michael, Matt, and Dan  
I am so sorry for your loss. I know Isabelle was a big part of your lives growing up and still was. It will be hard without her but she will always be in your hearts and never too far away. If you need anything let me know. I will do what you need. She was a special lady and will be missed.

**Eileen Charon** - September 08, 2020 at 10:02 PM

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“ Kevin, Diane, Mike, Matt & Danny,  
You lost someone who held a special place in your hearts and in your life. Isabelle was truly blessed to have you all in her life. She was a amazing remarkable woman. We have so many fine memories of her at all the boys games. Her yelling out into the crowd as a proud Aunt. Her offering even to help bringing the boys to and from CYC practice. One memory was her telling me David was brought home a little later was because she swung by Burger King or McDonalds, because she said the boys were hungry, lol. I know the boys enjoyed her company as much as she enjoyed there's. She will truly be missed by everyone. May memories of her bring you comfort, peace and reassure you that love endures forever. Our Deepest Sympathy to you all.

Terry Lancto  
David Glass

**Terry** - September 08, 2020 at 08:39 PM

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“ Dear Diane and Kevin, family

I am sorry to hear of your Aunt Isabelle's passing. What a remarkable and accomplished woman, she certainly leaves a legacy to very proud of. May each of you find find peace in the fond memories and love you shared with her to the very end. God bless her, may she rest in peace in His love and may God bless each of you.

Thank care Diane. Hope to see you soon

Pat McLaughlin

**Patricia McLaughlin** - September 08, 2020 at 12:40 PM

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“ Kevin, Diane and family. Isabelle was a wonderful person and most certainly will be missed. Sending my sincere condolences.

**Rick Ostrowski** - September 08, 2020 at 12:07 PM

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“ Dear Diane and Family,

I am so sorry about the loss of your beloved Aunt Isabelle. Diane, you have told me so many wonderful stories about Isabelle over the years. She certainly was a remarkable woman and a true blessing to your family. She will always be near in the memories that you hold of her in your heart.

With deepest sympathy,

Ellen Hynes

**Ellen** - September 08, 2020 at 12:02 PM

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“ Dear Kevin, Diane, Michael, Matt and Dan,  
I'm so sorry to hear about Isabell's passing. I know what she meant to all of you. She was so very close to all of you. My thoughts and prayers go out to you and I know she will be missed.

Love  
Pat Socha

**Pat Socha** - September 08, 2020 at 11:08 AM



“ Dear Diane, Kevin, Michael, Matt, and Dan,

My deepest sympathies.

I celebrate that Isabell a positive presence in your family, and by extension in my life as well. Diane and I shared many lunchtime walks to discuss work situations where we'd re-frame and look at situations through Isabell's calm and optimistic eyes.

The stories of her adventures with the boys and their friends when they were young, and her drives across state lines to her favorite deli in her late years of driving were always enjoyable. Her deep love for family was evident.

Sending hugs and love,

Amy Steele

**Amy Steele** - September 08, 2020 at 12:43 PM



“ Dear Kevin, Diane, Michael, Matt and Dan -  
Please accept our sincere sympathy in the passing of Isabelle - what a special lady she was!! We all have such wonderful memories of her. It was so evident how much she loved you all and how much you all loved her.

Sending our love to you all.

Leslee & Tom

**Leslee & Tom** - September 08, 2020 at 04:57 PM