



Doris Layne (Lambert) Mahalak

August 17, 1922 ~ March 17, 2020 (age 97)

Doris Layne Mahalak, 97, passed away on St. Patrick's Day, a date family and friends believe she deliberately orchestrated, as March 17, 1900 was also her mother's birthday. The March Irish season was a favorite of this past president of Hibernia Marching Society of Mississippi.

The Gulfport resident and great-great grandmother is known for her volunteerism, civic involvement, generosity, kindness to friends, family and strangers, her quiet faith and amazing joy of life. She died March 17, 2020, after a brief bout with pancreatic cancer.

Doris was born Aug. 17, 1923, in Pineville, La., married Lawrence Warren Mahalak during World War II, and moved in 1957 to the Mississippi Coast. In the 1960s, the Mahalaks owned one of the Coast's first drive-ins, Biff Burger in Gulfport, known for its secret sauce, round hotdogs and crab rolls.

After her husband's death and when in her 50s, Doris earned a bachelor's degree from The University of Southern Mississippi and became children's librarian at the Navy Seabee Base, and was eventually named an honorary Seabee. Earlier, she was a beloved bus driver for South Mississippi Regional Center for the developmentally disabled.

A Hibernia charter member, Doris also participated in other Celtic groups and relished enjoyed visits to Ireland. She was Queen Leda XXV for Krewe of Gemini, and a Melvin Jones Fellow at Biloxi Lion's Club. In her 70s, she learned sign language to volunteer at De l'Epee Deaf Center. She also shared her craft knowledge at senior centers.

While where she attended services didn't matter to her, she was a beloved member of Handsboro Methodist Church.

Doris is preceded in death by her husband and a son, Dr. Lawrence Mahalak, Jr., her sister, Sunshine Lambert, and her parents, Mr. C.G. Lambert, and Maude Lambert.

She is survived by a son, Michael Mahalak of Gulfport; Grandchildren, Pamela (Mahalak) Jordan, Lawrence Mahalak III, Michael Robert Mahalak, Virginia (Mahalak) Mize, and James Russel Mahalak. Doris also has 11 great-grandchildren, and one great-great-grandchild.

Visitation will be held from 9:30 to 10:00 a.m., Thursday, March 19th at Riemann Family Funeral Home, 11280 Three Rivers Road, Gulfport, MS. The procession will leave at 10:15 a.m. going to the National Cemetery in Biloxi for the Committal Service at 11:00 a.m.

A memorial service will be held on August 17, 2020, at Handsboro Methodist Church, on what would have been Doris' 98th birthday. Time to be determined.

The family would like to extend their deepest appreciation and thanks to SAAD Home Hospice for the loving, tender care and support provided to both Doris and family.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation in Doris' name to the Charles L. Walker Senior Center. 4008 8th Street Gulfport, MS 39501
