



Helen L. "Helzy" Burns

July 7, 2011

BURNS, HELEN L. "HELZY," a well known local entertainer and loved by everyone, passed away peacefully while in the arms of her daughter and son-in-law at Episcopal Church Home where she has resided the past few months as the result of an accident. Helen was Queen of the Garvin Gate Blues Festival for years and played piano at the old Cunningham's Restaurant downtown for over 25 years, where she cultivated what came to be called "the Friday Night Gang." Everyone was welcome to sit around the piano and sing. If she didn't know a song you requested, she would smile and say "Honey, if you can just hum a little bit of it, I'll play it for you and she Always did!" No one could come close to being the total entertainer Helen was. Doing the splits on stage at age 74 before she had knee replacements, she never failed to not only wow the crowds, but to blow them away! Until recently, she still entertained those living in nursing homes with her old sweet songs and her big heart. Among so many other notable things, Helen was a welder at Vultee Aircraft during World War II, was the first female truck dispatcher in Kentucky, where she retired from Louisville Chair Co., and a woman who never considered defeat. She was always there if you needed her. She never knew a stranger and you couldn't go anywhere with her without being introduced at least a few times to old friends from here or there. Everyone knew and loved Helen and she knew and loved them without judgment. Helen will be missed, but her soulful spirit and song lives on in each of us who knew her. She was preceded in death by her granddaughter, Stacy Kumar; and eight brothers and

sisters. Survivors include her children, John Manion (Patty), Mickie Burke (Joyce) and Debbie Thomas (Bruce); grandchildren, Kim, Kelly and Kristy Burke, Sazi Thomas, Penny, Pam and Juan Perez; and several great-grandchildren. Funeral services will be 12:00 p.m. Tuesday at Owen Funeral Home, 5317 Dixie Highway with burial in Louisville Memorial Gardens West. Visitation will be from 2-8 p.m. Monday. The family asks that expressions of sympathy be made to the family to assist with funeral expenses.

Tribute Wall

JM

“Helen was probably the most fun, entertaining lady I have ever known. We have had so many good times with her. Several times she went to visit my parents when they were in the nursing home and when she played piano for them it made them so happy. Thank you, Helen, for all the good memories. We love you and will miss you dearly.

Jan Martin - June 28, 2018 at 03:54 PM

BB

“Dear Debbie, Bruce and Sazi,

I am so sorry to learn of your mother's passing. I hope that your memories of her bring you comfort. Please accept my condolences; peace be with you.

Beth

Beth Bonham - June 28, 2018 at 03:54 PM