



## Carol Lee Jirik

February 18, 1959 - October 23, 2021

Carol Lee Jirik, age 62, of Minneapolis passed away October 23rd, 2021, in her home. Preceded in death by her parents, Mary A. and Theodore W. Jirik. Carol was a loving mother, sister, and friend to many. She dedicated her life to her passionate work as a registered nurse, and later a nurse supervisor, caring for patients and colleagues alike with her whole heart. She enjoyed sharing humor and care with her family, friends, and patients as a way to create joy in even the most difficult of moments. Among many passions were Carol's loves for Saturday morning cooking shows, playing endless games of euchre at family gatherings, and a good Bruce Springsteen concert. Survived by her daughter, Rachel Smith, her siblings, Mary, Stephanie, Nancy, Frank, and Scott and nieces and nephews, Julia, Jimmy, Anna, Kyle, Kari, Becca, Sam, and Charlie.

Her immediate family is holding a private memorial to commemorate her life.

# Previous Events

## Family Gathering

OCT **30** (CT)

Nokomis Park Chapel  
1838 E. Minnehaha Parkway  
Minneapolis, MN 55407  
(612) 721-1651  
[info@washburn-mcreavy.com](mailto:info@washburn-mcreavy.com)

# Tribute Wall

JE

“ I was shocked and saddened to hear of Carol's passing. I worked @ the Riverside Clinic with Carol-she was in Oncology and I worked in the Surgery Clinic. I had many interactions with her during that time as we had mutual patients. I always found Carol to be willing to help and answer questions. I transferred to the Specialty Center and we continued to have interactions again because of mutual patients. When she transferred to Regions Cancer Care Center, I was happy we would continue with our working relationship. I could always count on her to help me and our patients however she could. She was a fantastic nurse caring for patients at a difficult time in their lives. She will be missed not only by her family but also her patients, their families and her co workers. Jean Pfarr, RN

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**Jean** - November 09, 2021 at 12:18 PM

RT

“ 1 file added to the album Carol



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**Robert Truhn** - November 01, 2021 at 11:38 PM

GO

“ Carol was everything written about her. She will be missed by a multitude of people whose life she impacted. I send my sincere condolences.

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**Ginger Bell Ohmann** - November 01, 2021 at 10:53 PM

SK

“ I first interacted with Carol when I was hired by HealthPartners in 2015. She was at the HealthPartners Riverside Clinic at that time. As a member of the Regions Hospital Laboratory and Pathology Medicine Department, I assist the oncology department with ordering tests. Carol and I would message and call when we needed to communicate, but I never got to see her because she was in Minneapolis. When I heard she was taking a position at Regions I was so delighted because I could finally interact with her in person. She did not disappoint. I found her to be such a knowledgeable, kind, compassionate, and funny person. She will be so greatly missed! I can't fathom how many lives she must have impacted over the years. My deepest condolences to Rachel and the rest of Carol's family. - Shellie Kieke, genetic counselor

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**Shellie Kieke** - November 01, 2021 at 09:13 PM

JF

“ My mother, Nancy Flannery, always said Carol was one of the most talented nurses she had ever known. When my mom was a patient on her own floor and everyone else was intimidated about caring for their nurse manager, Carol marched in and took control, firmly, lovingly, calmly. She soothed and nurtured my mother when, I am firmly convinced, no one else could have. I know I was at a loss. I will always be grateful to her for that gift of love and professional expertise, and my admiration for her skills, which my mother never stopped praising, will never be forgotten. I like to think they are together again, putting up their feet and enjoying the pride of a job well done and laughing at some shared memory once more. Rachel, your mom was the best. I am so sorry for your loss.

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**jennifer flannery** - November 01, 2021 at 07:48 PM

CL

“ I was so saddened to hear about Carol’s passing. She was such an amazing person. Always kind, funny and supportive and so dedicated to her family, friends and profession! Although we weren’t as close in recent years, our friendship was so special to me and I have so many wonderful memories! Parties, walks around the lakes, a trip to NYC, weddings, long heartfelt talks and many a Springsteen concert. I always believed fate intervened and we’d run into her at later concerts to keep some connection. Hugs, prayers and sympathy to Rachel and the entire Jirik family. Cindy (Mueller) and Dan Lapadula

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**Cindy Lapadula** - October 31, 2021 at 01:55 PM

SH

“ I am so sad to hear of Carol’s passing. Carol and I met and became friends when we were nurse’s aids at Mala Strana nursing home in New Prague. She was so compassionate and had a calling for nursing. Carol was the maid of honor on my wedding back in 1982. She is the reason I am a Springsteen fan! Even though we weren’t as close in recent years, i still have so many wonderful memories of the times we spent together Love and sympathy to Rachel and all the Jiriks Sue Puncochar Hassing

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**Sue Hassing** - October 30, 2021 at 03:07 PM

AR

“ Carol was a GEM! I will remember Carol for her wonderful sense of humor- she could always make me laugh no matter how crappy of a day it was. She was so thoughtful to our patients and always went to extra mile to help them out and navigate things. I appreciated her constant sense of calmness.

*Rachel, I remember your mom trying to maintain her "calmness" while awaiting to see how your dissertation went. She was so proud of you!*

*I feel so lucky to have known Carol! My heart goes out to Rachel and family.*

*Carol was an amazing woman!*

*Anne Reiber*

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**Anne Reiber** - October 29, 2021 at 04:04 PM

DS

“ Carol will be missed by so many. I read the stories below about her mentoring, coaching, teaching, leading and especially her caring, and hope we can somehow carry on her legacy in our oncology work. She cared for others well, kept the focus on our patients and encouraged me to do the good work, the next right thing for each person we encounter. I feel honored to have learned with her.

*Rachel - your mom would light up when talking about you and your bright mind, courage and accomplishments. She was so proud of you and she will ALWAYS be your biggest fan. My thoughts and prayers are with you and your whole family.*

*Denise Shannon*

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**Denise Shannon** - October 29, 2021 at 04:00 PM

MM

“ Carol is truly one of a kind. Her sense of humor, sense for doing what was right and passion for nursing will stay with me forever. She fiercely loved her daughter, Rachel, and spoke of her often. Carol had a way of letting you know where she stood but in a way that made you think rather than react. She will be greatly missed.  
~Monica Magee

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**Monica Magee** - October 29, 2021 at 09:47 AM

RH

“ I met Carol in 1995 when I joined the Riverside Oncology practice as a "newly minted" oncologist--Carol helped to organize me! I referred to her as "my sister" because of our similar ages. In our leadership roles, I would meet with Carol weekly and so enjoyed those sessions (we began to commiserate that we were getting to old for this!). She was an outstanding communicator--she knew just how to talk to physicians and had such great communications skills with patients. Earlier this week, after hearing of her death, one of my patients brought a gift of flowers to the clinic because of how kind Carol had been to her. Although I have only met Rachel a handful of times, I feel I know her well because of how often Carol talked about her and how proud she was of her

*Randy Hurley  
HealthPartners Cancer Care Centers*

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**Randy Hurley** - October 29, 2021 at 09:34 AM

CH

“ Oh, how I will miss Carol. I first met Carol back in the early 2000s when I started working for HealthPartners. Throughout the years of knowing her, she always showed interest in "my story" outside of work. This was actually one way I learned, from Carol, as a way to start a conversation with patients. She would say that she would sit down with them and ask, "What's your story?" and it was always interesting to see where their "story" went. I still use that today at work and outside of work. It is an incredible way to start a conversation. Carol was always full of insight and explained things to me the way no one else could. She was a great teacher, listener, encourager and friend. One of my absolute favorite things she used to say was, "because it's the right thing to do." I have heard her voice saying that many times over the years throughout my years of nursing, whether I was working with her or not.

*My condolences to Rachel and the rest of her family. I am really going to miss her Rachel stories, especially about her kitties! Carol sure did raise a lovely, strong young woman. Carol always spoke fondly of her family and loved spending time with them and their shared love of Bruce.*

*Rest in peace Carol.*

*With grace and gratitude,  
Christy Dentz*

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**Christy** - October 28, 2021 at 08:20 PM

AG

“ Carol was my supervisor in the Cancer Center and was such a calm, thoughtful, and patient leader. She was a great listener and would show interest in our lives outside of work. She often asked to watch dance videos of my daughter and often asked me to share pictures of recipes I've made. She got to know who we were outside of our roles on her team.



*She will be so missed by many. Thank you for sharing a peek into the other aspects of her life! These pictures truly show what I had only heard in words - her family was so important to her and she loved getting together with to share a laugh and a good beer!*

*Prayers and love to Carol's entire family.*

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**Alison G.** - October 28, 2021 at 03:25 PM

KC

“ This nurse navigator first met Carol while she managed the Riverside Oncology clinic. Carol was always so very nice and welcoming and very funny. She made me feel welcome, special, and engaged. We often discussed politics, life, and many other things besides cancer. Carol helped me figure out "unsolvable problems" in clinic and was invaluable to helping me become more confident in my own skills. Carol was an excellent and very patient teacher.

*I can't tell you enough how truly saddened I was to hear of Carol's passing.*

*The next morning, I noticed one of the most beautiful sunrises I have seen in a long time.*

*Tears came down my cheek as I had the sense that Carol was saying goodbye. There were a few wispy cirrus clouds that were vaguely shaped like angels.*

*RIP Carol!*

*-Kevin Collis, RN Navigator*

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**Kevin Collis** - October 28, 2021 at 03:20 PM

KH

“ I was shocked and saddened to hear of Carol's passing. I had the privilege of working with Carol the past few years and will truly miss her sense of humor, quick wit, nursing knowledge and passion she brought to her work. I am lucky to have had the opportunity to get to know Carol and collaborate on a number of projects within the cancer center. I learned a lot from her and always appreciated her willingness to answer all my questions. What a huge loss for so many. May you rest in peace, Carol.

*My condolences,*

*Kristin Hanrahan, Quality Improvement at HealthPartners*

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**Kristin Hanrahan** - October 28, 2021 at 02:12 PM

SH

“ 1 file added to the album Carol



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**Stephanie Hendrickson** - October 27, 2021 at 08:18 PM

JG

*This is a wonderful view of Carol's wide circle of family and friends, great memories!*

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**Judy Geck** - October 27, 2021 at 10:50 PM

BR

*So sad...*

*I first met Carol when she was a young, student nurse at St. Mary's in 1982 and I was a fellow moonlighting for a hematology practice. I re-met her in 1995, when I came to HP, first as an Oncology nurse, then as the supervising nurse at Riverside and most recently, the supervising nurse at Regions. Carol was a great nurse and a great human, she was whip-smart and loved people. I once told her she would have been a great physician if she had wanted-wonderful intellect, true common sense, great oncology knowledge and a loving, compassionate human being. I'll miss her and our patients will, too.*

*Rachel: I remember tossing you in the air when you came to clinic one time, horrifying your mom. I wish you and your family peace and solace. Your mom was a great human, had many friends and mentored many. Please stop by at Regions Cancer Center so we can all share a hug and a goof cry.*

*Brian H. Rank, MD*

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**Brian Rank** - October 28, 2021 at 09:42 AM

CH

*What a wonderful tribute. A lifelong friend that I will truly miss. No matter time elapsed, when you needed to talk she would be there. So many memories.*

*To Rachel and family - Carol may have left this shore and we will all miss her, but she was welcomed on another shore and will always be with you. Prayers to all of you.*

*Carrie Rantala Heitz*

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**carrie heitz** - October 28, 2021 at 09:02 PM

ST

“*My heart goes out especially to Rachel and the other "Jirik kids". You are in my constant thoughts and prayers. So glad I had a chance to visit with Carol at the recent Tuma family reunion. We revisited the "chocolate Sultan" story and how Carol had fun not letting Mary Beth forget it! Another example of Carol's great sense of humor. Rest in peace.*

*Sister Kathy Trenda*

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**Sister Kathy Trenda** - October 27, 2021 at 11:38 AM

ND

*No words can illustrate how thankful that We had so many great times and that she came into my life. I pray for strength for Carol's family as she goes on ahead. Looking forward to reuniting in the presence of the Lord. Love always my dearest friend and soul sister. Nancy Dahlin*

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**Nancy Dahlin** - October 27, 2021 at 02:35 PM

VC

“*A kind and compassionate person with a great sense of humor, my prayers to Rachel and and Carol's siblings that they be comforted by love and support if those around them*

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**vickie Conley** - October 27, 2021 at 10:56 AM