



## Lesa Ellen Hester

January 5, 1961 - September 20, 2015

Lesa Ellen (nee Bruning) Hester of Hessel, was a locally renowned cook whose talents enhanced meals at the Les Cheneaux Club, Les Cheneaux Yacht Club, and the tables of friends and family for more than 40 years. An environmentalist, who was also greatly interested in social change and international culture, she died unexpectedly Sunday, September 20, 2015, from complications caused by unsuspected cancer.

Lesa was born January 5, 1961, in Sault Ste. Marie, to Rita and Ronald Bruning. She attended Les Cheneaux Community Schools in Cedarville where she was accepted to the National Honor Society, and was graduated from Cedarville High School in 1979. She went on to major in anthropology at Grand Valley State University in Grand Rapids, where she befriended many of the international students and brought them to Les Cheneaux.

Lesa adopted the role of caregiver early on, a trait she became known for as she cared for her grandparents, friends and family. She was always someone to be counted on— an eager and willing babysitter, dog walker, and adopted parent and daughter to many.

Lesa found peace in the woods and on the water around the Les Cheneaux area. She loved hiking, and harvesting berries and other edible wild plants from the woods. She cooked seasonally and sustainably decades before it

became a trend. Lesa loved the arts, and was an avid reader and visual artist who excelled in pastel drawings. She had a beautiful singing voice, and loved music and dancing, especially the music of other countries and cultures. She was known by friends as “a rascal,” and was always up for adventure and new experiences that expanded her world view or amused her. Lesa was well known for throwing “The Look,” her sharp intellect, and a deep appreciation for sarcastic wit, which she rewarded with a smirk or eruptive laughter.

Throughout her life, Lesa “worked tirelessly, albeit sarcastically,” a friend observed, while bringing a relaxed sense of pride and professionalism to her catering jobs, event management, and cleaning. She traveled to Canada, China, Turkey, Spain, and Morocco, but was always hungry for more world travel.

In college, she worked at places that elevated her love of the culinary arts: Ashley’s Restaurant and a Jewish delicatessen and Italian eatery, Rabbi Guido’s, both in Ann Arbor, as well as Weird Beard's Pizza near Grand Rapids. Other employment included cleaning and care-taking, plus various bookkeeping and administrative jobs around the Les Cheneaux area.

Her organizational memberships reflected her interest in giving back to her community and helping wherever she could, including service on the Les Cheneaux Watershed Council, Clark Township Ambulance Corps, Les Cheneaux Band Boosters, Snowsfest Committee, and more. She helped launch a recycling program several decades ago. She dreamed of working for the Peace Corps.

Lesla is survived by her husband, Michael C. Hester; sons, David J. Malkowski and Dennis K. Malkowski of Cedarville; siblings and their spouses, Denise “Kim” Horn of Rogers City, Jeffery A. Bruning and Rick Omlor of Marquette, Pamela K. and Tim Swope of Albion, Gretchen L. and George Chapel of

Grosse Pointe Woods, and Richard D. Bruning and Amy Polk of Cedarville; her mother-in-law, Jodi Tassier of Cedarville; father and mother-in-law, Wilson "Ray" and Lisa Thomason Hester of North Carolina; brother-in-law and his wife, Wilson "Scout" and Davine Hester Jr. of Cedarville; sister-in-law, Melinda "Mindi" Chisholm of Cedarville; several nieces and nephews, and her best friend of more than 30 years, Cherie Rye of Pickford.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Ronald and Rita Bruning.

Memorial donations may be directed to the Lesa Ellen Bruning Hester Memorial Scholarship Fund at the Les Cheneaux Culinary School, P.O. Box 26, Hessel, MI 49745, or to the Les Cheneaux Ambulance Auxiliary, P.O. Box 453, Hessel, MI 49745.

The celebration of Lesa's life will be Saturday, October 3, at Snow's Bar and Grill in Cedarville, at 1 pm.

Interment will be at Cedar Cemetery of Cedarville.

Before she passed on, Lesa accepted Jesus Christ as her Lord and Savior.

R. Galer Funeral Home of Pickford, is serving the family. Condolences may be sent to the family at [www.rgalerfuneralhome.com](http://www.rgalerfuneralhome.com).

# Cemetery Details

## **Edgewood Cedar Cemetery**

4 Mile Block Road  
Cedarville, MI 49719

# Tribute Wall



“ *Lesia Ellen Hester*

October 05, 2023 at 09:54 AM



“ *Lesia Ellen Hester*

October 02, 2023 at 10:14 PM



“ *Lesia Ellen Hester*

September 01, 2022 at 07:49 PM



“ *Lesia, you were one of the most intelligent persons I've even known and your special wit will be sorely missed. For almost 40 years, one of my best "to do's" was to make sure I had a chance to visit with you. For someone only 5' tall, you sure know how to bring the rest of us down to our knees... in laughter! Will always miss our special friend.*

*Love to all your family; wish we could be there next week, but certainly there in spirit.*

*Norm & Stacy Sandler*

Norm & Stacy Sandler - September 29, 2015 at 12:26 PM

  
Richard  
Bruning

“ 1 file added to the album *New Album Name*



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**Richard Bruning** - September 28, 2015 at 11:09 AM

MB

“ *I have such great memories of Lesa. She was so headstrong in school. Boy you did not want to be in gym class playing dodge ball or kick ball as Lesa had such power-I was almost afraid of her, she had a wicked slam. Also, I remember going over to her house and at age 15 she had made a spinach souffle-pretty ahead of the game, that Lesa-none of us girls had ever eaten one or even knew what it was, but it was delish! I also remember her being so into freeing Tibet, I didnt even know what that was about back then. She also announced one day in high school that she was a Universalist Unitarian-we were all just wowed by her advanced knowledge of such things-she always was reading. About 6 or 7 years ago I was up North and walked with her around 4 mile block in a 3K run. I came in last, but i remember her slowing up for me a bit and we had a few good laughs. Rest in Peace, Boom Boom, one like you wont come around again for a long long time! Peace and Love to all who knew and loved Lesa, especially the creative, colorful, unique and special Bruning family-you were a joy to know growing up and I wish you all the comfort and Love and Peace that Lesa would want for you.*

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**Mary Rudd Burck** - September 25, 2015 at 11:10 AM

GB

“ *Why is it that it takes a death for the rest of us to wake up from our everyday lives and remember how much we care about old friends and family. I was totally shocked when I heard the news of Lesa passing. It's just not fair.*



*I want to express my sincere condolences to her children, husband and very importantly her siblings. I shared many wonderful years with Jeff but the entire Bruening family was always welcoming and generous. We shared many good times on the island (and off).*

*Lesla was a wonderful, headstrong, intelligent woman who will be missed by many. Rest in Peace.*

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**Gayle Weaver Bouchard** - September 24, 2015 at 10:29 AM

KH

“ *My deep apologies for not mentioning Dennis and David -- I'm obviously not in my right mind. You have lost a wonderful mother who meant so much to many people. I am so very, very sorry for your deep loss. Please know that many people are thinking of you during this awful time. My deepest condolences and love to both of you.*

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**Kris Hamel** - September 22, 2015 at 06:21 PM

MM

“ Lesa was my first friend in Michigan, along with her husband Michael. My heart it's in pain for her loss and for her kids and Michael, her dad and her brothers... She was like another grandma to my kids and the smartest , more open minded , less prejudice person I know in this area. I am sorry I didn't spend more time with her the last few years. I'm so sorry David and Denise, you were so lucky to have her all this time. My prayers go to the Brunnin and Hester family. My dear friend, I love you and will forever keep you in my heart...

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**Michelle M Maldonado** - September 22, 2015 at 04:35 PM

KH

“ My heart goes out to Michael, to the Bruning siblings and their families, to Mark C. and Lesa's closest friends. There are no words to express this profound loss. Lesa was a beautiful person, a caregiver, a lover of life and the fruits and glories of Mother Earth.

*Lesla Ellen and I were best friends for the first twenty years of our lives. There are so many memories, so much we did together, so much we shared, so much love and laughter. Most of you siblings were there. You know. I share your tears and sorrow.*

*Many people share your grief and want to extend all the support we can. Please let us come together to celebrate Lesa's life, to share our memories and cry together. Those of us who remain want to remember Lesa.*

*Lesla Ellen Bruning Hester, I will always love you. You are in my heart forever. You left us way too soon. Damn you, Lesa!!*

*With deepest sympathy and love,  
Kris Hamel  
Detroit*

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**Kris Hamel** - September 22, 2015 at 12:57 PM