



## Marilyn June Rairigh Hillman

August 22, 1955 - April 16, 2026

Marilyn June Rairigh Hillman, age 70, passed away at her home in Kincheloe, Michigan, on April 16, 2026. She was born on August 22, 1955, in Hastings, Michigan, to John Melvin and Betty June (Shaffer) Rairigh.

Marilyn's life was defined by the deep, lasting impact she had on her family, her community, and everyone fortunate enough to be loved by her. Raised on a farm near Sunfield, Michigan, Marilyn learned the value of hard work early on — a trait that would become the cornerstone of her life and her legacy. After graduating from Lakewood High School in 1973, she attended Michigan State University, earning her nursing degree. Marilyn met her loving husband Eric there at a Beatles party in the dorm. They married on September 11, 1976. She began her career in Lansing area hospitals and later served as a public health nurse in Ingham County. Her deep dedication to the well-being of others eventually led her back to the University of Michigan to earn a master's degree in public health administration.

In 1992, Marilyn and her family moved to Kincheloe, where she channeled her fierce work ethic into a profound calling. Working for the Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan and later as the Public Health Coordinator for the Sault Ste, Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians, Marilyn didn't just manage a department; she was a tireless advocate. She fought for grants and resources that brought tangible, lasting health benefits to the Native American community, ensuring that

countless individuals and families could lead healthier, better lives. Even after her retirement in 2017, the impact of her advocacy remained.

However, Marilyn's greatest legacy was the one she cultivated at home. She raised two children, Matthew and Stephanie, instilling in them the same diligence, warmth, and capacity for love that she carried within herself. She was exceptionally proud to see them grow into hardworking, loving adults. She was grateful for the opportunity to meet her grandchildren, and seeing Ethan, Clara, Dean, and Dawson grow into happy, intelligent young people brought a deep, lasting joy to her heart.

In her quiet moments, Marilyn nurtured life around her. She found simple, profound peace in watching and feeding the hummingbirds that visited her yard, planting vibrant flowers each spring, and caring for her houseplants. She also had a deep love for travel, with the beauty of Alaska holding a particularly special place in her heart.

Marilyn's legacy of love, advocacy, and hard work lives on in her husband, Eric Hillman; her son, Matthew (Krista) Hillman of Spring Lake, Michigan; her daughter, Stephanie (Chris) Agozino of Milford, Michigan; her treasured grandchildren, Ethan, Clara, Dean, and Dawson; her sisters, Elaine (Jim) Curtis of Roanoke, Virginia, and Patricia (Jim) Ludwig of Sarasota, Florida; her brother, John (Kaelene) Rairigh of South Carolina; brother-in-law, Cris (Jo) Hillman and many cousins.

Marilyn maintained a lifelong friendship with her roommates from college, Jean (Fred) Russell and Susan (Mark) Youngren.

Marilyn is preceded in death by her parents, Melvin and Betty; her beloved Grandma, Clementine; and other relatives.

A celebration of Marilyn's life will be held at a later date.

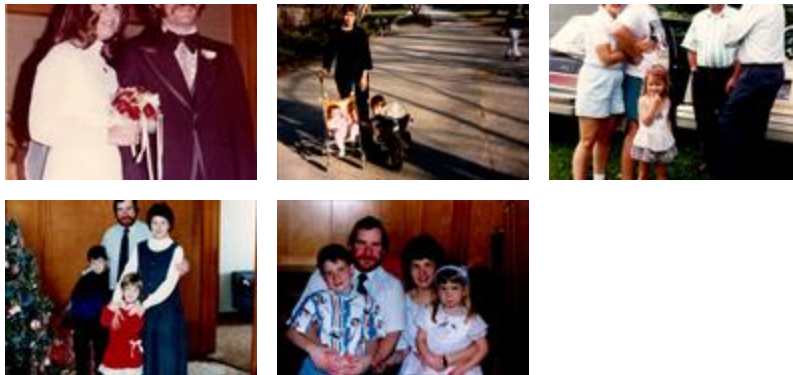
Family Life Funeral Homes – Sault Ste. Marie is assisting the family with arrangements. For those who wish to share memories or offer condolences to the family, please visit [www.familylifefh.com](http://www.familylifefh.com).

Obituary as submitted by family.

# Tribute Wall

MH

“ 6 files added to the album Marilyn through the years



**MATTHEW HILLMAN** - May 06 at 12:00 PM

MS

“ Marilyn and I shared a Birthday. She was a year younger than me. We shared a friendship and worked together both when she worked at inter tribal and for Soo tribe. She was my supervisor and a great one while at Soo tribe. She was kind and thoughtful and driven to improve health care for the tribe. She loved her husband and children and grandchildren. We would try to have a luncheon date on our birthday to share stories and exchange gifts. I love you Marilyn and yes you will always be younger than me as you would remind me with that special smile.

**Mary Ann Stott** - April 27 at 09:09 PM



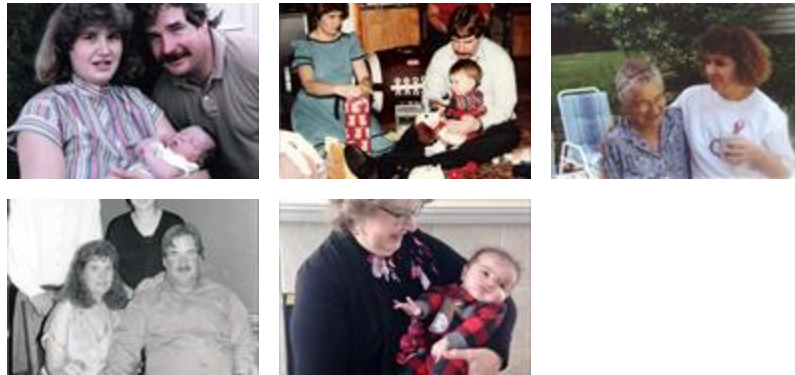
“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Marilyn June Rairigh Hillman.



April 27 at 08:36 AM

EC

“ 9 files added to the album Marilyn through the years



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**Elaine Curtis** - April 23 at 05:15 PM

JS

“ Praying for God to comfort Marilyn's family as she joins him in his kingdom. I'm sure Uncle Melvin and Aunt Betty were waiting there to take her hand. My first memory upon hearing the news of Marilyn's passing, was of our family reunions and the time we spent together. With Love Jon L.

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**Jon L. Shaffer** - April 22 at 10:08 AM