



Peter C. Gianakura

March 25, 1922 - December 17, 2023

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Good men must die, but death cannot kill their names. – Proverbs

Peter Chris Gianakura, (AKA Papa, Papou, Preacher Pete from Carrie Street) Age 101, entered into eternal rest on Sunday, December 17th. To say he will be missed by many is an understatement! He was a blessing to all who knew him, as well as those with whom he had a chance or brief encounter.

Peter was born to Katherine (Economou) and Chris Gianakura on March 25, 1922, in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan. He graduated from Sault High School in 1940, and attended Cleary College, in Ypsilanti. He served in WWII in the US Army Medical Corps for over four years, and upon his return attended Soo Tech (Now LSSU). He owned and managed the family restaurant, The American Café, for 43 years. On a semi-retired status, he was a guide at the Tower of History and delivered flowers for Co-Ed Flowers and Gifts. He officially retired in 1998 but preferred to call this phase of his life “renewal”, rather than retirement.

He was a lifetime member of St. George Greek Orthodox church and served as President of the Church Council. He was also a member of the Masonic Order, Bethel Lodge 358 and a 32-degree Mason Scottish Rite. He was

president of the original Child Guidance Clinic, and co-chairman with his good friend Lester Oberman of the Red Cross Drive after the war. He and his beloved Georgia were members of LSSU's Elders and the Chippewa County Historical Society.

Peter married Georgia (Gianacakos), the love of his life, on September 18th, 1960, who predeceased him on July 1, 2022. Their marriage was a model for all who knew them. He is Papa to his surviving daughters, Catherine Rogg, Joy (Mark) Allen and Anastasia (Victor) Stacey, and Papou to his six grandchildren, Pierce and Blythe Rogg, Christian and Charlotte Harrison, Hunter (Claire) and Hayden (Grace) Stacey. He is also survived by his sisters, Helen Reinkensmeyer and Joy Fife along with many nieces and nephews. He is predeceased by his parents, and infant brother, John; brother, Samuel Gianakura and sister, Sophie Kephart.

Peter owned a successful business, but his heart was with serving others and meaningful conversation, not business itself - people were his business. He had a kind heart, a quick wit, and a love for all. He also had a story for any situation. The true success of Peter's life was engaging with others, making them feel special and being the most amazing husband, father, brother and grandfather, anyone could wish for. His parents and siblings would agree that he was a devoted son and brother. Peter will be remembered for a life well lived and how he made others feel.

He wrote a book about his observations and experiences when working at the café and about his life growing up in the Soo and eventually taking over his father's business. His daughter Catherine was the catalyst and editor of the project. Friends Chris Roll and Dee Stevens also reviewed the manuscript. Sault Printing was the publisher of the book – Reflections from the Grill, An American Café.

Peter touched many lives through the customers and employees at the American, but he also made many friends when he relocated in 2014 with Georgia to Grand Rapids to be closer to their daughters. A soul like Peter's should be shared. His family is grateful for the many wonderful friends he made in their Grand Rapids home. So many beautiful and lasting family friendships have been forged. Thank you to all of the Soo friends who showed love and care for Peter and Georgia in the past several years and visited when they were in the area.

Over the past few years, many have asked Papa for his secret to a long life. His response usually included having a strong faith, not holding grudges, loving one another, and having a grateful heart, which he had, to the very end. In addition, spend time in nature, read, and include a bit of single malt scotch at 3 PM each day.

Good night, Papa. God Bless you.

Peter asks that we please seek to forgive others, share our passions with many, spend time with our family in prayer, speak kind words to all, share our faith, and say words that are meaningful to our loved ones. If you feel you must do something, plant a tree, or do something to grow a meaningful life in others. These are Peter's wishes (Thank you Diane Rose Kutchin for the inspiration).

If you wish to contribute beyond that of the above, please consider:

The Gianakura Scholarship Fund, LSSU (scholarship for a future writer or journalist) [Issu.edu/give](https://issu.edu/give), and select "Peter and Georgia Endowment".

Faith Hospice <https://faithhospicecare.org/donate/> to continue their amazing

work, and whose loving care over the past year has been unrivaled.

Edison Christian Assisted Living Center <https://www.edisonchristian.org/give/>, whose staff are a blessing to us as and the whole family and provided Papa with love and kindness for the past 18 months.

Visitation will take place at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church at 330 Lakeside Dr. NE, Grand Rapids, MI, on Thursday, January 4th from 10-11 AM followed by Christian Funeral Services at 11 AM. Friends and family are asked to remain at the church following the services for a meal and a toast to Peter's amazing life and passing on to his eternal home.

A Memorial Gathering for Georgia and Peter Gianakura will be held Saturday, June 8, 2024, from 2:00 PM to 3:00 PM, at Family Life Funeral Homes, 4951 S. M-129, Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan 49783, with a Memorial Service to follow at 3:00 PM. A Graveside Burial and Military Service will occur beforehand at 12:30 PM, at Riverside Cemetery in Sault Ste. Marie.

Obituary as submitted by Peter's loving family.

Family Life Funeral Home assisted the family with arrangements.

Condolences may be left to the family at www.galerfuneralhomes.com

Previous Events

Funeral Service

JAN 4. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church
330 Lakeside Dr. NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

Friends and family are asked to remain at the church following the services for a meal and a toast to Peter's amazing life and passing on to his eternal home.

Graveside Service

JUN 8. 12:30 PM - 1:30 PM (ET)

Riverside Cemetery
3260 Riverside Drive
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783
<https://www.saultcity.com/parksrec/page/riverside-cemetery>

Memorial Gathering

JUN 8. 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM (ET)

Family Life Funeral Homes - Sault Ste. Marie
4951 S. M-129
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783
(906) 632-4951
ffh@familylifefh.com
<https://www.familylifefuneralhomes.com/>

Memorial Service

JUN 8. 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM (ET)

Family Life Funeral Homes - Sault Ste. Marie

4951 S. M-129

Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783

(906) 632-4951

flfh@familylifefh.com

<https://www.familylifefuneralhomes.com/>

Tribute Wall

KA

“ I never met Peter, but I always kept updated by his two amazing daughters Cathie & Joy! I know that their parents were there rocks. Cathie is a former boss of mine, & I know Joy through Cathie. My love, thoughts, & prayers goes out to them & there entire family.



Katie Arnson - January 03, 2024 at 08:08 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Peter C. Gianakura.



January 03, 2024 at 03:16 PM

MS

“ I worked at the American Cafe in the 70's. It was being around family with Peter and Georgia. The memories bring a smile. They were wonderful people, true role models.

Maureen Sillers - December 23, 2023 at 11:52 PM

LS

“ May his memory be eternal.
Brings back so many memories of visiting the Soo with my parents, Spiro & Sophie Sinigos. Dad grew up in the Soo. ❤️🙏

Lou Sinigos - December 21, 2023 at 03:36 PM

JA

I remember your family Lou! Joy Gianakura Allen

Joy Allen - May 15, 2024 at 01:25 PM

LI

“ *So sorry to hear he was such a sweetheart be sadly missed hugs for all his family and friends Linda*

linda - December 20, 2023 at 10:08 PM

LM

“ *Peter was a wonderful man. Our son rented from him & Georgia when he first moved to the Sault. He was like a grandpa it made us relax because of this. Love to you Peter. Lisa & Dennis Menard.*

Lisa M Menard - December 20, 2023 at 05:26 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Peter C. Gianakura.*



December 20, 2023 at 02:58 PM