



Carole A. Packer

Life Story

Carole Anne Packer was a wonderful wife, mother and grandmother, who through her commitment to her family, redefines the concept of unconditional love. She had a full, caring heart, and everyone who spent time with her felt the warmth of her presence. Carole had a generous spirit and loved to give of her time and talents.

1935 is probably best known for the events in Europe that were leading up to World War II. But good things also happened this year. Amelia Earhart was the first person to fly solo from Hawaii to California, and Parker Brothers released their new game "Monopoly." Famed comedienne, Carol Burnett, was born in this year, and Babe Ruth hit his 714th - and last- home run. It was also a good year for Carl and Ruth (Raymond) Breed as they welcomed the birth of their only child, daughter Carole Ann (named after Carole Lombard), on September 19, 1935, in Kalamazoo, Michigan . Although her father used to joke that he was going to have enough boys, for a baseball team, the couple wasn't able to have any more children after Carole. As an only child, Carole received tons of love and attention from both her parents and extended family.

The Breeds were the founding family of a small community in Van Buren County called Breedsville, as well as owning the hill where the battle of Bunker Hill was fought. In their close-knit community of Paw Paw, Carole's father earned a living as a carpenter while her mother was a schoolteacher. She and her mother were also regular attendees at the local Baptist church. Carole learned the appreciation for life in a small community as a small child when her father tragically lost his leg in a farming accident. The kindness her family received at this difficult time was something they never forgot.

Full of vim and vigor, Carole created many wonderful childhood memories growing up in Paw Paw. She put her all into everything she did, including playing the piano and singing in the school choir, which she loved. Carole did not participate in sports, as an extra curricular she instead went to work as a telephone operator during high school. While in the 8th grade, Carole was introduced to Bob Packer, a young man from Lawton , and though they didn't know it at the time, they had met years before. It just so happened that their grandparents were friends and when Carole was born, Bob, along with his grandparents paid the Breed family a visit with a gift for new baby girl. At the time they were first introduced, Bob was dating one of Carole's friends. However, when this girl wasn't home for a date one night, he decided to visit Carole instead. The two soon began dating and were high school and college sweethearts. As a couple, they loved to go dancing and never missed a dance at either Lawton or Paw Paw High Schools or college. They danced often at the Crystal Palace and even traveled to Chicago to dance at the Aragon Ballroom.

Following their first year in college, Carole and Bob made the decision that Carole would quit school and go to work as an office worker so they could be married. Though their parents thought they were too young Bob and

Carole were married in the Kanley Chapel at WMU. The newlyweds enjoyed a very romantic honeymoon in northern Michigan in a cottage on a private lake. With Loons calling, the setting was absolutely perfect for a beautiful honeymoon. A year and a half after marrying, Carole and Bob delighted in the birth of their first child, son, Steven, in December of 1955. Although he was unplanned, they were incredibly happy with their new blessing. Four years later and a little more planned, the couple welcomed their daughter, Sandi, into their hearts and family.

Carole was the definition of motherhood. From Boy Scouts and Brownies to teaching Sunday school and being involved in their other activities, Carole's passion was to support her family. She was patient, caring and generous with her time; she never thought twice about going out of her way to help someone who needed her. Carole never stopped being concerned about her children even in their adulthood. Even as recent as two weeks ago, Sandi and family were traveling and Carole asked her to let her know that they had arrived at their destination safely. When her children were growing up, the family took many vacations throughout the United States, as well as Mexico, the Caribbean and South America. Carole always made sure that the house was well stocked with food; she was very well organized when it came to food planning and no one went hungry at family gatherings. Carole always took responsibility for planning all of the meals for their annual camping trip to the Arizona deserts. This trip often consisted of 30-40 people, family and friends alike. Always thinking of others, she also took time to make special dishes, like her nephew Ron's potato salad without onions, her grandson Zak's specially made non-allergenic foods, cooking family favorites like spaghetti and meatballs, her delicious meatloaf and of course, her peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. It was her attention to detail that truly made each family member feel special.

Later in life, when Carole was blessed with grandchildren, she considered this yet another incredible blessing in her life. She poured the same amount of love into these relationships as she did with her own children. When her son Steve was raising his son Chaz as a single parent, Carole was there to help in anyway she could. To this day, her grandson fondly remembers the many stroller rides and drives into town for a video with his grandmother. As with her children, Carole attended as many of her grandchildren's sporting events as possible, even traveling when she was ill or walking long distances to attend a football game. No matter what, family was always first in her heart.

In her free time, Carole had many hobbies and interests to keep her busy. She was a member of the Bridge Club, Republican Women and was the Porter Township Clerk for 10 years. Although she loved her kitchen, Carole enjoyed going out to eat and could even remember what she had at a certain restaurant years before. Like at home, Carole planned what she would eat at a restaurant some times days in advance of their going. In her quiet moments, she enjoyed reading, particularly romance novels, and doing crossword puzzles. She wasn't much of a television watcher, but recently she did enjoy Jeopardy, a medical or an animal show and the Travel Channel. She was also an avid football fan with the Green Bay Packers at the top of her list of favorite teams. Carole's favorite pastime was traveling with her husband, which they did whenever possible. They spent winters in Florida & Arizona, traveling in the southern states and together, traveled the World. Carole enjoyed numbers and she particularly liked the number 13 and considered it her lucky number.

Carole had many great talents and everything she did, she did well. She was quite humble about her abilities and was never overbearing. Carole's circle of friends consisted of many childhood friends that remained lifelong friends, they along with her family respected her greatly, both for her strength of mind and her unconditional love. Even the family pets seem to naturally desire Carole's attention the most. Carole was the kind of woman who appreciated important life moments and celebrated each milestone in her life, including the occasion of her 25th

and 50th wedding anniversaries. Of all the wonderful things in Carole's life, spending time with her family towered above the rest. She devoted her life to being a wonderful wife, mother and grandmother - all of which she not only achieved, but excelled at. Although Carole will be deeply missed, her legacy of love and dedication leaves her loved ones with wonderful memories and a strong foundation to look to for comfort.

Carole Anne Packer, age 69 of Lawton, MI , died on Friday, September 9, 2005, at her home. She was preceded in death by her parents. Carole is survived by her husband, Robert Packer of Lawton; two children; Steven (Cathy) Packer and Sandi (Ron) Packer Armstrong also of Lawton; six grandchildren: Chaz, Stephanie, Jonathon, Jamie, Zak and Zander. Carole spent her life enriching the lives of her husband, children, grandchildren and friends.

Learn more about Carole, view her Life Story film and visit with her family and friends on Monday, September 12, from 2:00-4:00 and 6:00-8:00 p.m. at the Betzler & Thompson Life Story Funeral Home, M-40 South of I-94, Paw Paw, 657-3870, where a Celebration of Life Service will be held on Tuesday, September 13, at 11:00 a.m. with the Reverend Ron Packer of the First Christian Church of Paw Paw officiating. Interment Oak Grove Cemetery in Lawton . Casket bearers for Carole will be Dennis Snyder, Duane Packer, Dick Slevatz, Ronnie Schincariol, Chaz Packer, Isao Asacura, Toby Fields, and Phil Hissong. Honorary casket bearers will be Zack Armstrong, Zander Armstrong, Jamie Packer, Stephanie Packer, Jon Packer, Robin Beacham, and Sandy Joe Slevatz. Please visit Carole's personal memory page at www.lifestorynet.com where you may archive a memory, order flowers or make a memorial contribution to the Lawton Lions Community Center Museum.