

Olga 'Ollie' Fachko, 98, operated Fachko's Lounge on William Street

By [Anne Neville](#) | Published February 27, 2019 | Updated February 27, 2019



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When Olga "Ollie" Fachko took one of her frequent flights to Las Vegas, she liked to make the journey interesting for her fellow passengers.

She would collect a dollar from each one, writing on each bill the exact time the passenger predicted the the wheels would touch down. When the plane landed, the person who picked the correct time would get the pot.

"I guarantee she got a dollar from the pilot," said her grandson, Mark A. Homa, laughing. "You didn't say no to Ollie. And she wanted the people on the plane to get excited."

Mrs. Fachko brought that outgoing spirit of fun to her work during the decades she owned and operated Fachko's Restaurant and Lounge on William Street in Lovejoy, her grandson said.

Mrs. Fachko died Feb. 23, 2019, in Mark Homa's Grand Island home, where she had lived for more than three years. She was 98.

"She could have run for mayor down there in the Lovejoy area," Homa said. "Everybody knew her, and everybody loved her."

She was born on July 12, 1920, in Lovejoy, the first child of Polish immigrants Simon and Eleonora (Motyka) Homa and sister of Simon Jr., Theodore, Chester and Arthur.

Educated in Buffalo schools, she entered the working world early. At age 19, she already was working as a housemaid in a private home. In the early 1940s, she married John "Johnny" Fachko, also a Lovejoy resident, and the two lived upstairs at 1738 William St., where they opened Fachko's Restaurant and Lounge.

After Mr. Fachko died on May 22, 1959, at age 46, his wife continued operating the bar. "So don't tell me a woman can't do anything she wants," her grandson said. "After Johnny passed, it wasn't a family operation; it was an Ollie operation."

Mrs. Fachko was a petite lady with an occasionally bawdy sense of humor. She gave up alcohol every year for Lent, and if a customer came into the bar on Ash Wednesday without a cross of ashes, "She would stick her finger in an ashtray and give you one," her grandson said.

"Way back when, they had a full kitchen," Homa said, which turned out everything from lobster dinners to fish fries, and "people waited in line outside for their food." As the decades passed, the dining business declined, but Mrs. Fachko still cooked Thanksgiving dinners for customers, some of whom got their only holiday meal there.

"You talk to customers in their 60s, and they remember how their fathers used to bring them in, and Ollie would sit them at a table and give them chips and pop," Homa said. "She'd let the little ones go behind the bar and use the fountain gun to fill their glasses."

She enjoyed playing gin rummy with customers. "People came in there not just to drink, but to see Ollie," Homa said.

She was fond of while miniature poodles, and she took her dogs everywhere, her grandson said. If a new customer objected to having a dog in the bar, Mrs. Fachko would say that the poodle owned the bar, he said.

Mrs. Fachko was an avid bowler who won many trophies in nationwide competitions. For one competition, she had both her permed hair and her white poodle dyed blue to match her blue bowling ball, Homa said.

She enjoyed many cruises through the years and saw Elvis Presley in concert three times, as well as Frank Sinatra and other members of the Rat Pack.

Until she was in her mid-90s, Mrs. Fachko started her day by going downstairs to the business and opening the door, then mopping, dusting and cleaning before sitting down to read the newspaper, Homa said.

Besides Mark Homa, she is survived by another grandson and a granddaughter; six great-grandchildren; and five great-great-grandchildren.

A Commemoration of Life service will be held at 6:30 p.m. Saturday in the Kevin M. Mason Funeral Home, 154 Weimar St. at Casimir Street. Memorials may be made to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.