

Mary Jane Luhr, devoted to health-related causes

- By [Maki Becker](#)
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Mary Jane Luhr never edited her remarks. She called it like she saw it.

She volunteered many hours over her life to health-related causes and was an expert at crafts, from needlepoint to knitting. A skilled bridge player, she also played golf.

She lived most of her life on Grand Island and wintered in Florida where her family loved to visit her.

Her hair was always done just right, even when it turned silver, and she always wore lipstick.

To her sons, she was always "Mother." To just about everyone else, she was "Aunt Mary." Julie Snyder, part of her extended family, said everyone aimed to grow up to be like Aunt Mary.

Mrs. Luhr, who had lived the last decade at Canterbury Woods, died May 22 at the age of 96.

"It was a full life," Snyder said.

Born and raised in Buffalo, she attended Our Lady of Lourdes grammar school and St. Mary's Seminary. After she completed two years of study at a women's business school in Buffalo, she worked for her father, Fred Hendler, at the company he founded, Aero Pattern Works of Buffalo. The company's specialties included patterns for airplane motors, and while working there, Mrs. Luhr met many pioneers of the early aviation industry.

In 1945, she married Dr. Alfred F. Luhr Jr., a surgical oncologist. They lived on Grand Island, where Mrs. Luhr had spent much of her childhood. Dr. Luhr died in 1991.

Mrs. Luhr was a member of the Erie County Medical Society and the Gross Medical Club Auxiliary, and was a past president of the Marillac Guild of Sisters Hospital. She was also a past president of the Twentieth Century Club. She was a Canisius High School Lady Founder and a Canisius College Scholarship Associate.

Mrs. Luhr also was a parishioner of St. Louis Catholic Church in Buffalo for many years.

She was a member of Cherry Hill Club in Ridgeway, Ontario, and a past member of the Quail Ridge Club in Boynton Beach, Fla., and the Delray Beach Club in Florida.

As a widow, Mrs. Luhr remained active with her family and volunteer work. She was known for always being smartly dressed. Into her 90s, she was famous in her family for enjoying a Canadian Club on the rocks with a splash of water. "And if that splash was more than a splash, she'd let you know," Snyder remembered fondly.

When Mrs. Luhr had to go to the hospital, she insisted on going to "the Kenmore Mercy" and was always grateful for the care she received, particularly from the nurses.

Survivors include two sons, Alfred F. III and Frederick H.; three grandchildren; three great-grandchildren; and nieces and nephews.

A Mass of Christian Burial for Mrs. Luhr will be offered at 10 a.m. Tuesday in St. Louis Church, 35 Edward St.