



## Honorable Patricia Costello

February 11, 1928 - January 25, 2018

The Honorable Patricia Costello, retired judge of Monroe County's First District Court, passed away peacefully at home after a life of accomplishment, humility, admiration and love.

Born in Council Bluffs, Iowa on February 11, 1928 as the youngest child of Frank and Mary Head, she had two brothers, John and David, and a sister, Elizabeth. The family later lived in St. Paul, and when she was a teen and young adult, in Chicago. As a girl, she spent many summers on her aunt and uncle's farm in North Dakota, escaping the threat of polio, common in the cities in those years. There, she developed a lifelong fondness for the countryside and the peace that is inherent in such places.

In Chicago, she entered DePaul University and graduated from its College of Law in 1950, passing the Illinois Bar examination that same year. She began her legal career in the trust department of Continental Illinois National Bank and Trust Co., noting recently that law firms did not hire female attorneys at the time.

In 1951, she married Philip A. Costello of Chicago, whom she met in law school. The couple soon relocated to South Carolina following Mr. Costello's service as a Naval Reserve officer. It is there that they began their own family, before moving back to Chicago. In 1956, the young family eventually put down roots in Monroe. The couple quickly found many new friends and began what became decades of community engagement.

In 1966, when she was just 38 years old, her husband died leaving her responsible for their six children, then ranging in age from two to 13 years old. She rose to the challenge with the support of family and friends. To provide for herself and her children, she passed the Michigan Bar examination, resumed her legal career and joined her late husband's law firm, which became Weipert, Costello & LaVoy. She was the first woman to practice law in the history of Monroe County. Within a decade, she built a reputation as a knowledgeable and compassionate leader and won election to Monroe County's First District Court,

becoming the first woman to be elected judge in the county. Judge Costello was re-elected three times and ultimately served 24 years on the bench.

Although Mrs. Costello focused her life on caring for her family, she also became a board member and past president of United Way of Monroe County, a board member of MORE, Catholic Social Services, St. Mary Parish Council, SMCC's High School Board and other community organizations. She was also an active member of several civic groups including the Monroe Rotary Club, Altrusa, and Monroe County NAACP.

Whenever possible, Mrs. Costello enjoyed travel throughout the United States and visited well over a dozen countries including Japan, Australia, Ireland, Switzerland, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and just last year, Sweden and Denmark. She was an avid reader, devouring everything from books on travel, economics and physics to novels about pastoral life. There was rarely a topic on which she could not intelligently engage nor one about which she was not interested.

Among her fondest interests were her grandchildren. She delighted in their lives and could be found cheering on the sidelines of many of their sporting events. She rarely missed a graduation ceremony, First Communion or Confirmation, even if that meant jumping from state to state to do so. At every chance, she let her grandchildren know how much she loved them. They, in kind, loved and were inspired by her.

Throughout her life, Mrs. Costello tended to her affairs quietly and remained modest about her achievements. Always impeccably dressed, she had a keen sense of design and lent a genuine sophistication and elegance to all she did. With an easy laugh, she approached the world optimistically and encouraged those around her to succeed.

A devout Catholic, Mrs. Costello attributed her many successes to her faith. "It was God's accomplishment," she was quoted as having said in a recent tribute by The Monroe News. "I feel very fortunate."

In addition to her husband, Mrs. Costello was preceded in death by a loving grandson, Sean Brady. She is survived by her six children and their spouses: Mary (Paul Matthews), Philip (Nancy), Holden (Lisa), Kevin (Susan), Ann (Richard) Brady, and Daniel; 13 grandchildren: Alison, Andrew, Emily, Philip, Paul, Sarah, Austin, Megan, Michael, Claire, Ethan, Julia, and Bryan; and many nieces and nephews.

A visitation will be held at Bacarella Funeral Home from 2:00 to 8:00pm on Friday, February 2nd. Mrs. Costello will lie in state at St. Mary Catholic Church in Monroe on

Saturday, February 3rd, beginning at 10:00am, and a Catholic Mass of Resurrection will be celebrated at 11:00am by Fr. David Burgard, and the homilist will be Deacon Mike Stewart. The family asks that memorials be directed to the Sean Brady Memorial Scholarship Fund.

# Cemetery

---

# Events

---

## St. Joseph Cemetery

909 N. Monroe Street  
Monroe, MI, 48162

**FEB** **Visitation** 02:00PM - 08:00PM

**2**

---

Bacarella Funeral Home, Inc.

Address: 1201 South Telegraph Road, Monroe, MI, US,  
48161

**FEB** **Scripture Service** 06:00PM

**2**

---

Bacarella Funeral Home, Inc.

Address: 1201 South Telegraph Road, Monroe, MI, US,  
48161

**FEB** **Instate** 10:00AM - 11:00AM

**3**

---

St. Mary's Catholic Church

127 N. Monroe St., Monroe, MI, US, 48162

**FEB** **Mass of the Resurrection** 11:00AM

**3**

---

St. Mary's Catholic Church

127 N. Monroe St., Monroe, MI, US, 48162

# Comments

---



“ Thinking of all of you, I have so many memories of your mom (and all of you). You are in my thoughts and prayers. Say HI to my folks Mrs. Costello...Ann (Borchert) Rabideau

**Ann Rabideau** - February 03, 2018 at 01:00 PM

---



“ What a remarkable life lived by the Honorable Patricia Costello! An inspirational life of excellence in both career and family. Sending warm thoughts and condolences to Alison and her family during this time.

-The Staff at Old Town Manor, Key West, Florida

**Kelly** - February 02, 2018 at 04:49 PM

---



“ Dear Mary,

May fond memories sustain you and your family during this difficult time.

With sympathy,  
Connie (Swiontoniowski) Tuma

**Connie Tuma** - February 01, 2018 at 05:43 PM

---



“ Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Honorable Patricia Costello.



February 01, 2018 at 03:15 PM

---



“ John F. and Linda Sue Head purchased the Gracious Lavender Basket for the family of Honorable Patricia Costello.



John F. and Linda Sue Head - February 01, 2018 at 01:33 PM

---



“ Dear Ann..My most sincere condolences to you and your entire family for the loss of your precious Mom. I'm sure she was such an inspiration as a Mom/mentor and positive public figure. You all must be so proud! Thinking of you....Love Mary Castellese Backonen

Mary Backonen - January 31, 2018 at 06:59 PM

---



“ Love Joe and Ryan Ashford Scottsdale, Arizona purchased the Sapphire Skies Bouquet for the family of Honorable Patricia Costello.



Love Joe and Ryan Ashford Scottsdale, Arizona - January 31, 2018 at 12:58 PM

---



“ Guiding Light Bouquet was purchased for the family of Honorable Patricia Costello.



January 31, 2018 at 11:07 AM

---



“ Chris Miller & Debbie DiOrio purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Honorable Patricia Costello.



Chris Miller & Debbie DiOrio - January 31, 2018 at 12:17 AM

---



“ Pretty Please was purchased for the family of Honorable Patricia Costello.



January 30, 2018 at 10:21 PM

---



“ Lavender Reflections Spray was purchased for the family of Honorable Patricia Costello.



January 30, 2018 at 12:05 PM

---



“ Costello Family,  
I am so sorry for your loss and send prayers and hugs to make it through this difficult time. Your mother was the most respected and admirable woman i have met. Its no wonder Betty and her were such good life time friends. They had so much in common. Their belief in god and family always came first. Your mother accomplished so much I have always been amazed by her. From her political career to all of her wonderful family! She had such a full heart with compassion and kindness for all. My deepest sympathy and condolences to all that adored her! Honorable Patricia Costello will be missed by so many!  
You have so much to be proud and thankful for!  
kathy Torres



“ A New Sunrise Spray was purchased for the family of Honorable Patricia Costello.



January 29, 2018 at 12:49 PM

---



“ Loving Lilies and Roses Bouquet was purchased for the family of Honorable Patricia Costello.



January 29, 2018 at 10:47 AM

---



“ Jane Joye Sullivan purchased the Small Garden Dish for the family of Honorable Patricia Costello.



Jane Joye Sullivan - January 29, 2018 at 09:47 AM

---



“ Mrs. Costello (as we addressed all of the moms) has a loving spot in my childhood memories along with the other neighborhood moms. I never heard an unkind word from her.....maybe we were too good to get a real scolding!!! She is an inspiration to all Moms who must approach obstacles with true positivity!! Holly Hedrick Woodhall

Holly Hedrick Woodhall - January 28, 2018 at 05:20 PM

---



“ Judge Costello was an inspiration to many. What a gentle, kind soul she was. My thoughts and prayers are with the family at this most difficult time.

Lynn McCloskey Harter - January 28, 2018 at 03:56 PM

---



“ Dear Mary and Family - so sorry to see this today. Sending love and prayers to you and your family. Thinking of you at this time. - Kim and Dave

Kim Charron - January 27, 2018 at 10:40 PM

---



“ Pat was a great lady whom I had many memorable exchanges over the years in our restaurant. She will be missed and yes she was "the Honorable"!

Jacki Corser

Jacki Corser - January 27, 2018 at 08:31 PM

---



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Honorable Patricia Costello.



January 27, 2018 at 03:59 PM

---



“ My condolences to the entire Costello family and to all the friends of Her Honor Judge Costello. Thank you for your many years of public service, as well as raising a wonderful family.

Dave Knudson - MSP/APD 1975/1985

David Knudson - January 27, 2018 at 01:13 PM



“ Judge Costello was a kind and beautiful lady. She was an inspiration to many young ladies. She was the first female attorney and judge I ever knew. Every time I would happen to see her in Monroe, she always had time for a few words and a smile. Rest In Peace and thank you. Mary Commarford Livernois

Mary Livernois - January 27, 2018 at 02:14 PM



“ Our condolences to the entire Costello Family! Holding you in the light. Deb and Charlie Hertlein Greensboro, NC

**Deb** - January 27, 2018 at 10:39 PM

---



“ Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Honorable Patricia Costello.



January 27, 2018 at 01:00 PM