



Dolores R. (Spano) Bender

March 18, 1936 - January 21, 2025

UTICA – Dolores R. (Spano) Bender, age 88, passed away peacefully on Tuesday, January 21, 2025. At the time of her passing, she was in the hearts of those she loved the most.

Born in Utica on March 18, 1936, Dolores was the daughter of the late Pietro and Josephine (Serio) Spano. She attended St. Mary of Mt. Carmel Grammar School and was a graduate of Utica Catholic Academy.

On September 22, 1956, Dolores united in marriage with Howard John Bender. A beautiful match, they were inseparable and completely dedicated to one another and their family. The couple shared over 67 years together prior to Howard's passing on February 7, 2024.

At one time, Dolores held an administrative role with the Utica Fire Insurance Company. She later took a break from the workforce to have her beautiful children and devoted her time to raising and nurturing them. When she returned to work, she held a position with the Upstate Computer Center where she reconciled bank checks at night. She subsequently held employment with the Fleet Banking Company and later with PAR Technology Corporation in their accounting department, the position from which she retired in 1992.

A loving and protective nurturer, Dolores was always there to point her family

in the right direction. A homebody at heart, she relished being in the company of those she loved most. She also enjoyed time spent visiting with her local relatives. You could find her lending a listening ear and sharing advice at times with her many nieces and nephews, whether visiting in person or over the phone.

Dolores was an adoring grandmother and great-grandmother who simply “gushed” when it came to her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. These generations of her family provided her with a beautiful “spark,” and she cherished her individual relationships with each of them.

In her spare time, Dolores could be found conquering word finds or watching soap operas, crime dramas, and mysteries – anything to prevent Howard from watching wrestling! Always thinking of others before herself, those who knew her well will remember her proclaiming as you walked out the door, “be careful driving!”

Dolores was of the Catholic faith and for many years was a parishioner of St. Mary of Mt. Carmel/Blessed Sacrament Parish.

Dolores is survived by her daughters and their loves, Jo Marie Drake and Paul Gleba, and Kathleen “Kathy” and Timothy Brown, Sr.; grandchildren, Kenneth “Kenny” Drake, Keith “Scooter” Drake, Kody “Kodman” Drake; Timothy, Jr. “TJ” and Andrea Brown, and Dr. Kaitlyn “Kait” Brown and Max Nulk; and great-grandchildren, Aubree, Rosalie, and Viola Brown. She held close to her heart the memory of her siblings and their spouses who preceded her, Chancy and Joseph A. Stefanini, Marie and William Stefanini, Joseph and Ann Spano, Grace and Anthony Rocco, Ann and Anthony R. Amarosa, Rose Spano, Mary Spano, Anthony Spano, and Salvatore Spano. She is additionally survived by her sister-in-law, Mary Spano; many nieces, nephews, great-nieces, great-nephews, cousins; lifelong friends, Carmen and Rosalie D’Ambro, Bernadette

Roy, and Louise Petti; and her canine companion, Duke, who was very near to her heart. She was additionally predeceased by her father-in-law and mother-in-law, Frank J. and Catherine A. (Hazel) Bender; brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law, Edward Harden, Ella (Harden) Kulmus, Catherine and George Rjesnjanksy, Frank and Antoinette Bender, and Thomas and Ann Bender; nieces, Carol Amarosa, Maryann T. Amarosa, and Sister Joan Rocco, OP; and nephews, Merle Stefanini, and Joseph Stefanini.

The family extends their sincere gratitude to Dolores' primary care physician, Dr. Amy Gorczynski, for her professional care and compassion throughout the years. Thank you as well to Dr. Emile Wassel for his genuine medical care, and to the Charles T. Sitrin Health Care Center, especially acknowledging the staff of the Mulberry House. Dolores was blessed with in-home caregivers, Sueann Madison, Tanya Woods, Carol Bartosiewicz, Kathy Jones, Debbie Manning, and Lori Pepper, all who went above and beyond, showered her with love, and treated her like a queen!

Visitation will be held on Wednesday, January 29, 2025, from 4:00-6:00 p.m. at the Eannace Funeral Home, Inc., 932 South St., corner of Hammond Ave. Memorial contributions in Dolores' honor may be made to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital online at www.stjude.org/donate; envelopes will also be available at the funeral home. Relatives and friends are respectfully invited to attend Dolores' Mass of Christian Burial and Celebration of Life which will commence on Thursday, January 30, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. at St. Mary of Mt. Carmel/Blessed Sacrament Parish, 648 Jay St. Entombment will take place in Christ Our Savior Mausoleum at Calvary Cemetery.

Cemetery Details

Christ Our Savior Mausoleum at Calvary Cemetery

2407 Oneida Street
Utica, NY 13501
(315) 735-2727

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN **29**. 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM (ET)

Eannace Funeral Home, Inc.
932 South Street
corner of Hammond Ave.
Utica, NY 13501
(315) 724-6714
eannacefh@roadrunner.com

Funeral Service

JAN **30**. 10:00 AM (ET)

St. Mary of Mt. Carmel/Blessed Sacrament Parish
648 Jay Street
Utica, NY 13501
(315) 735-1482
<https://www.mountcarmelblessedsacrament.com/>

Tribute Wall

VR

“ Victor and joann Rjesnjansky planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Dolores R. (Spano) Bender.

Victor and joann Rjesnjansky - January 28, 2025 at 09:10 PM

VR

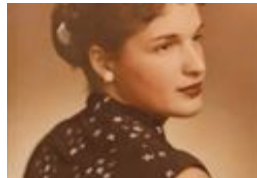
“ Victor and joann Rjesnjansky purchased the Lavender Reflections Spray for the family of Dolores R. (Spano) Bender.



Victor and joann Rjesnjansky - January 28, 2025 at 09:10 PM



“ 105 files added to the album Life Tributes



Eannace Funeral Home, Inc. - January 28, 2025 at 06:12 PM

NB

“ *Nena, Evie, and Will Bowman purchased the Beautiful Heart Bouquet for the family of Dolores R. (Spano) Bender.*



Nena, Evie, and Will Bowman - January 25, 2025 at 08:04 AM



“ *Pink Potpourri Bouquet was purchased for the family of Dolores R. (Spano) Bender.*



January 24, 2025 at 06:57 PM