



Mrs. Francine "Pudge" (Talerico) Mikalajunas

July 30, 1945 - February 3, 2021

DEERFIELD - Mrs. Francine "Pudge" (Talerico) Mikalajunas, age 75, passed away on Wednesday, February 3, 2021 at MVHS at St. Elizabeth Medical Center with her loved ones by her side. Before her departure, she had the sweetest send off — Mike and Franny kissed for the last time, with all the loving energy she had.

Born in East Utica on July 30, 1945, Francine was the daughter of the late Salvatore and Katherine (Putrelo) Talerico. She was a graduate of T.R. Proctor High School/Class of 1963. She also attended the Utica School of Beauty Culture where she earned her New York State credentials as a Licensed Beautician. Francine co-owned and operated along with her late sister, Elsie, a well known beauty salon with an awesome atmosphere, a clientele who became family, and walls that echoed many, many laughs. The business was located on Mohawk Street, and between Tom Trevisani and Francine's place, it grew to be a hangout for a lot of good people. In fact, this is where she met the love of her life.

On October 5, 1974, in a private ceremony, witnessed and blessed by their dear friends, Jim and Gloria Rocci, Francine wed Michael Mikalajunas. He knew from the moment he met Franny that he was going to marry her! Their life was filled with so much love, fun, and legendary stories. They had a magical relationship that endured until the last moment. She loved her husband and waited on him, hand and foot for 47 years of what would be described as 'bliss'. They truly loved each other, and their daughters knew of

their love and affection, and used it as an aspiration in their lives.

Francine was a force to be reckoned with. She had a magnetic personality, unconditional reciprocal love to those who loved her, and an inner strength that completed her life. Her welcoming love was a hallmark to many people; she was instantaneously hospitable and thoughtful, and made you feel safe, loved, and welcomed. The illness she endured for years was always second to her ability to be a great listener. Her house was a haven for many kids she watched over, and she was a second mother to her children's friends. They cherished those moments as they matured and reflected on memories of those days. As a mom, she was her kids' hero, and they strived to be the person she was. She was, in fact, their everything. She supported her girls as they grew and began their own families, and her phone calls to them varied from checking in, or just sharing a moment. When her grandchildren came along, hugs and kisses came with them. She knew each of them as only a grandma can and catered to their needs individually. They adored and loved her like no other, and they affectionally called her either "Pudge" or "Coco". They will forever carry her memory in their hearts, ...a powerful love.

As a couple, Franny and Mike were Netflix binge watchers and their meeting place was the "Top of the Morning Cafe" where they held court for hours. It was a cheerful place "where everyone knows your name". They also loved dining out and visiting the casino with their "birthday club" group of friends that have been together for ever. They had a standing date night with Sandy and George, such precious times with great laughs. Franny maintained friends from grammar and high school which spoke volumes about her loyalty. She also enjoyed baking, cooking, and entertaining, which was a great outlet for her. Holidays evoked images of such great times together, and of course, food was the center of the events. Franny knew how to do the traditional overlook "The Malocchio" on Christmas Eve as a learning event for the younger generations. She devoted endless hours on the phone with compassion and counsel for a friend or loved one, no matter what the hour and in many hearts there are endless stories of laughter or lament, to be held close forever.

A woman of faith, Franny prayed the Rosary daily for those she loved. She cherished angels, to protect and watch over her, and to keep close those who had gone before her. She was a faithful parishioner of the Church of Our Lady of Lourdes.

Francine is survived by her husband Mike, the love of her life; her daughters and sons-in-law, Kelli and Keith Lasher, and Danielle and Michael Fogel, and the memory of her daughter, Michelle R. Mikalajunas who passed on October 8, 1985; her grandchildren who grandma loved “to the moon and back”, Ryan M., and Riley A. Lasher; and Anthony M., and Mason H. Fogel. She also leaves her nieces and nephews, Michael Leone and Angie Maclin, Michelle Leone, all whom she loved as her own; numerous cousins, especially Michael Curtis, MD who held a special place in her heart; in-laws, including Tommy and Angela Mikalajunas and their children Tommy Jr. and Joelle Mikalajunas, and Renee and Anthony Scalzo. She also leaves the wonderful memories of friends too numerous to mention, ...but you all know who you are because you knew Pudge! She was predeceased by her sisters and brothers-in-law, Rose and George Barlesi, Eleanor and Danny Bondi, and Elsie and Mickey Leone.

The family is grateful to the nurses and staff of MVHS at St. Elizabeth Medical Center CT ICU for the amazing care and compassion rendered while attending to Francine.. A special thank you to Nurse Mary and Leo Sullivan, M.D. for their support during her final moments; and Atul Butala, M.D., and Christopher Max, M.D. for their more than 25 years of care and medical guidance.

The family will honor and commemorate Francine’s life at a private time. Relatives and friends are respectfully invited to attend Francine’s Memorial Mass of Christian Burial which will commence on Saturday morning, February 13, 2021 at 10:00 at the Church of Our Lady of Lourdes. Social distancing and registration for contact tracing will be implemented. Also, a mask covering your nose and mouth will be required. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations in

Francine's name may be directed to Mother Marianne's West Side Kitchen at St. Joseph & St. Patrick Church online at <https://mmwsk.org>. Envelopes will be available at the service.

During this time of social distancing that we are all experiencing, please take a moment to connect with Francine's family through the "Memories" section of her obituary. Our prayers go out to all as a sign of our continued support.

Tribute Wall

JH

“ *Jeremy Hayes lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Francine "Pudge" (Talerico) Mikalajunas*



Jeremy Hayes - March 23, 2021 at 09:58 AM

MP

“ *Please accept our sincere sympathy during this time of your loss! I know my brother Kim and sister-in-law, Maureen are all enjoying coffee together with Pudge!*
Emil and Janet Benzo-Paparella

Mary Janet PAPARELLA - February 18, 2021 at 02:17 PM

BS

“ *Mike and family...my deepest sympathy goes out to you on the loss of one of my special friends throughout our high school days. She always made our days brighter and was always was “our go to person” to solve our problems. I am so glad I got to see her at “the Top of the Hill” in November and reminisced many of the great times we had at school and at the dances. seemed that no matter what...she always had that perpetual “smile”. She will be missed but always loved. Butch and Joanne Sisti*

Butch Sisti - February 13, 2021 at 08:40 AM

TB

“ An amazing woman who defied all odds during her lifetime. What an inspiration to her family and friends and especially her daughters and grandchildren. The beautiful bond between her and Mike was felt and seen by all! I remember when her girls were little girls and how she loved being a mom. I also will cherish the memories of the support and love that Francine and Mike have shown to Sandy and George through the years. Friendship is about being there for one another and they did that. I also love the expressions and comments that Francine made when Mike was telling a story- she loved him (and still does) to the moon and back!!

Theresa Brindisi - February 12, 2021 at 07:47 AM

AI

“ Pudge was a great cousin and friend to me. We always laughed a lot and had many happy times together . SHE WAS A GREAT PERSON AND FULL OF MUCH LOVE AND KINDNESS I will miss her Love Anthony Iacobacci

anthony iacobacci - February 11, 2021 at 06:30 PM



“ Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Mrs. Francine "Pudge" (Talerico) Mikalajunas.



February 10, 2021 at 10:41 PM

MK

“ Danielle & family,

It breaks my heart to hear the news about your mother's passing. She was like a second mom to me. I have so many great memories of hanging out with your family. She was a exceptional woman who always made people feel loved and welcomed. I will keep her and your family in my prayers.

Mark Knight - February 10, 2021 at 07:34 PM



“ Meat & Cheese Sympathy Gift Crate was purchased for the family of Mrs. Francine "Pudge" (Talerico) Mikalajunas.



February 10, 2021 at 03:53 PM



“ Your Light Shines was purchased for the family of Mrs. Francine "Pudge" (Talerico) Mikalajunas.



February 10, 2021 at 01:39 PM

JS

“ Dear Kelli and family,

I am truly sorry to hear about your mother's passing. She was a lovely person; always with a smile and warmth for all she met. I will keep her and all of you in my prayers.

*With much affection,
Joyce Squillace*

Joyce Squillace - February 09, 2021 at 04:04 PM

JS

“ Mike, Kelli, Danielle and families,

I wanted to express my deepest sympathy to all of you for the loss of such a wonderful and loving wife, mom, grandmother and friend, she will surely be missed by many but never forgotten.

In our few interactions, it felt like I knew your mom for years, and every time we talked she always made me laugh. She had a presence about her that was special, she was an exceptional person.

My thoughts and prayers are with you all in this most difficult time.

Jill Simons-Roof

Jill Simons-Roof - February 08, 2021 at 09:09 PM



PC

“ Kelli (& Family): It's with a sad heart that I share my deep condolences with you for the loss of your Mother. Your beautiful tribute to her that you shared in her obituary was something that I will remember for quite a while. You made me feel like she would have been someone that I would have loved to know and be friends with. What a lucky family she had and you all were blessed to have her beautiful spirit in your lives. The legacy she left behind will never be lost and your memories of her will live with you always. I pray that you find comfort in those memories and in the love she had for you. Her spirit will be your strength as you travel this road through the pain of her loss.



*Sending you love & support.
Paula Coleman xoxo*

Paula Coleman - February 08, 2021 at 02:50 PM

BL

“ I will never forget Pudgy's kindness. Although we knew each other thru Pauline and Marlene I quickly became aware of her love of Mike and her family. The moment you entered her home she made you feel like family. My prayers are with her family especially Mike. Pudgy you will never be forgotten. God is holding you close.

Barbara Lambright

Barbara Lambright - February 08, 2021 at 01:02 PM



“ *Beautiful Dreams was purchased for the family of Mrs. Francine "Pudge" (Talerico) Mikalajunas.*



February 08, 2021 at 12:02 PM



“ *Dear Mikalajunas, Talerico, and Fogel Families,*

We are very sorry for your loss. Our thoughts and prayers are with you during this time.

With Sympathy,

George Duke and the Duke family

George Duke - February 08, 2021 at 10:50 AM



“ *KLasher . . . so sorry to hear of your Mom's passing. My condolences to you and your family.*

KBrown - February 08, 2021 at 06:18 AM

MP

“ To the family of Pudgie (that's how I always spelled her name), I was so sorry to hear about her passing. She lived with her mother (Katie or Katrinka) upstairs from us when I was a child and was one of our babysitters. One of the saddest days of my young life when she moved away with her beloved mother.

I am sure my mother has the pot on and your mother is taking her pastaciotti out of the oven.

May your soul Rest In Peace.

MaryAnn Conte Porubic - February 07, 2021 at 04:25 PM

FR

To the Mikalonis family so sorry for your loss

frank rotundo - February 08, 2021 at 12:43 PM

CA

“ *Mike and family,*
I was so sorry to hear of this sad news in the paper. I send my sympathy to all of you. Francine was just wonderful and I have many fond memories of her. I'll always remember how my Mom and I said that Francine was the Joey Heatherton of Utica. My thoughts are with you!
Carl Antonucci

Carl Peter Antonucci - February 07, 2021 at 03:41 PM

KK

“ I’m sending my love and condolences to Mike and all the family she and Mike were such a loving part of my sons life while he was growing up with Danielle and I will always love her for loving him and gathering him into her family.



Kathleen Knight - February 07, 2021 at 02:52 PM

CM

“ I’m so sorry for your loss. She was a great lady. RIP 🙏

carolyn mierzwa - February 07, 2021 at 02:51 PM

KS

“ Danielle & family,
Prayers for all of you during this time, she was so loved. Everytime I had the pleasure of seeing her she always had an infectious smile on her face. Her time here may be over but her love and legacy will forever live on. Sending hugs and love ❤️
The Shavers



Kari Shaver - February 07, 2021 at 12:33 PM

TS

“ Mike, Kelly and Danielle, so very sorry for your loss...thinking of you and your families and sending prayers...Jeanne and Tom Sebastian

Tom and Jeanne Sebastian - February 07, 2021 at 12:06 PM

PB

“ Kelly, Mike and family.
So sorry to hear about your mom's passing.
My prayers are with you. God Bless, Paula
Brittelli.



Paula A Brittelli - February 07, 2021 at 10:06 AM

KF

“ Kelly Fargnoli lit a candle in memory of Mrs.
Francine "Pudge" (Talerico) Mikalajunas



Kelly Fargnoli - February 07, 2021 at 09:41 AM

JM

“ To Our Beloved Family,

So very sorry to hear that we lost our lovely sweetheart Pudge. She was a beautiful baby. As a teenager, I babysat her and her two sister's Eleanor and Elsie. All the awesome memories we have of our Putrelo cousin's club gatherings and luncheons. She reminded me so much of her Mom the way she related to people...always so happy...God Bless. All our love, prayers, and blessings to all. 🙏

Cousins Margaret & Joe Montanaro and Family 🇺🇸

Joseph Montanaro - February 07, 2021 at 09:30 AM

AG

“ *Francine was an angel who walked among us. She and Mike were a devoted couple who showered love and compassion to everyone they came in contact with. Francine your generous heart will never be forgotten. You continue to inspire us. You will be sadly missed!*
Love you always,
Anne Gates

Anne Gates - February 07, 2021 at 08:23 AM

PS

“ *Mike to you and your family my sincere condolences. Paulette Sbarra*

Paulette Sbarra - February 06, 2021 at 06:19 PM

CS

“ *So sorry for your loss she was one special lady.*

connie aceto szczygiel - February 06, 2021 at 05:45 PM

ML

“ *My Dearest Pudge, I keep wanting to pick up the phone to hear your voice, but I know i can't. It's heartbreaking. I will love you forever my friend. Please know how much you are in my heart. Love you girlfriend. Please rest in peace. Marie*

Marie LaPolla - February 06, 2021 at 03:49 PM

AM

“ *OMG I cannot believe this. Francine was such a special person and loved by many. Condolences to my brother and the kids and grandkis. A new angel watching over you all. Prayers for all of u.*

*Sis and Auntie
Anne Owen Mikalajunas*

Anne Owen Mikalajunas - February 06, 2021 at 03:47 PM

FW

“ *To Pudges' Family, She was a great girl, friend, and most of all a daughter, I remember the years, wow they were many years ago, as we were kids, and used to visit each others homes, mine on Mortimer and hers on Brinkerhoff. You did all you could do for everyone, and now your faith in Our Lord and His Blessed Mother will bring you home; to be with them and all your loved ones they went before you. May your family find peace knowing that your pain is now over. Fiora Grandinetta Wilson*



FIORINDA B. WILSON - February 06, 2021 at 11:15 AM

CC

“ My dear friend Pudgy, you have now joined the Angels in Heaven as you were truly a special person in my life. All you had to endure in life never stopped you from caring and loving me and my son and all who knew you. You were a pillar of strength no matter what you were faced with. You were an inspiration to me and so many. Im sorry you had to suffer these last few days of your life but I know you're at peace now. You left your legacy in the hearts of your two beautiful daughters and your husband will carry you in his heart forever . I'll never forget you and will always love you. Rest peacefully now. ❤️



Christine Cortese - February 06, 2021 at 10:57 AM

RA

“ Mike, Kelli & Danielle I was heartbroken to read of Pudgie's death this morning. I have known her since high school & all I can say is she was a lot of fun. I loved watching her & Mike interact with each other & their wonderful relationship. She was certainly an inspiration to all of us. My prayers go out to all of you. Rosemary Anguish

Rosemary Anguish - February 06, 2021 at 10:17 AM

CG

“ Mike and family, we are so saddened to hear of Franny's passing. No one else could ever be the sweetest lady as she was. We enjoyed our conversations at Top of the Morning Coffee. It was always fun with many laughs. You're a couple made in Heaven. God Bless and our deepest sympathies to you and your family. ❤️🙏

Carolyn F. & John Gorea - February 06, 2021 at 10:10 AM

LU

“ *Lucretiarich lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Francine "Pudge" (Talerico) Mikalajunas*



lucretiarich - February 06, 2021 at 09:35 AM

LU

Will always keep you in my heart love to your family I will miss you my friend

lucretiarich - February 06, 2021 at 09:38 AM

JM

My deepest sympathy' to Mike and his Family. Pudge was one of the best and loved friend one could ever have. Prayers to you up in Heaven. 🙏🙏🙏 RIP in peace my Friend 🥺💕

joanne monescalchi - February 07, 2021 at 11:50 AM

DS

“ *I loved our conversations, laughs and memories. She was a living miracle. God bless you Pudge. It was wonderful knowing you all these years. Sympathies to Mike, the girls and families. Love Dory* ❤️

Dory Shaw - February 06, 2021 at 01:47 AM

LH

“ Mike and family, I am so sorry to hear of Pudge’s passing. She was just a loving person. I am so grateful to have renewed our friendship after so many years. Our lunches at the Top of the Morning brought laughter and love to everyone at the table and she was the one who pulled that all together. Her words of encouragement during my difficult time were always so uplifting no matter what she was going through herself. She was a very special person and she will never be forgotten. My love and prayers to you all 🙏🙏.

Lois Hoyle - February 05, 2021 at 10:12 PM

DG

“ Mike, Kellie and Danielle and families, I am so very sorry for your loss! We sure had a lot of fun and laughs between our visits and vacation to Lake George I will always cherish the memories we share! My prayers and love go out to you and your entire family! She was always such a support to me and I will never forget the time we had together! Love, Donna George

Donna George - February 05, 2021 at 05:03 PM

JG

“ Mike and family ,
We are so very sorry to hear this ... Pudge was a great person inside and outwe are thinking of you at this very difficult time ,our prayers and thoughts are with you and your family ...

Janice &Fred Greer - February 05, 2021 at 03:44 PM

DR

Kelli, I am so sorry for your loss. My thoughts and prayers are with you and your family. May she rest in peace.

Dennis and Kelly Rothwell

Dennis Rothwell - February 08, 2021 at 05:33 AM

JS

Kelli and Family, I am so very sorry for your loss. Your mother sounds like an absolutely amazing person and I now see where you get it from Kelli. Hold tight to the memories and laughs, my thoughts are with you all.

Joanna Sincerbeaux

joanna sincerbeaux - February 08, 2021 at 08:27 AM