

## Obituaries

### Irene Mary (Ernst) Fischer

**SAUK RAPIDS** - On December 5, 2018 Irene Mary (Ernst) Fischer entered fully into the Realm of Love and Light -- the Reign of God she had participated in during all of her walk upon the Earth.

Irene was born at home on the farm in Plymouth, Minnesota on April 25, 1933, to Lydie (Marx) and Irvn Ernst, the third of seven children. She graduated from Robbinsdale High School in 1951 and St. Mary's School of Nursing in Rochester in 1955. She married Jim (James) C. Fischer at St. Joseph Church in Plymouth on November 26, 1955.

Irene and Jim were blessed with eight children, with whom they made their happy, bustling homes in Moundsvew, North Minneapolis and Brooklyn Center. The Fischer household was never dull; the on-going tasks of cleaning, cooking, gardening, sewing and settling disputes were tempered by the joys of holiday and Holy Day celebrations; extended family reunions; summer vacations in bare-bone cabins on Minnesota lakes; camping trips; and active involvement in neighborhood and church communities. As their children grew up and began to make their own homes, Irene's compassionate care extended to neighboring children; Hmong and Vietnamese families fleeing danger in their homelands; and residents at St. Therese Senior Apartments. In 1996, Irene and Jim moved to a home on Little Rock Lake close to the town of Mayhew Lake, ancestral home for Jim and close to siblings in St. Cloud.

Irene enjoyed reading, learning, history, travel, Card Club with Jim and 3 other couples, volunteering with MCCL and Treasure Chest, and gatherings with her family. Irene's life has been an example of the Love of God made real and manifest in our common life on Earth. She lived a life of self-giving, humility, love and acceptance of all.



Her love lives on in her devoted husband of 63 years, Jim Fischer; her children: Jean (Barry) Nelson, Michael (Kimberly), Rebecca Sienko, John (Kara), Rosanne (Mark Trainor), Joe, Mary (Greg) Meier, Mark (Tammy); grandchildren: Emily (Joel) Beck; Betsy (Alex) Kirk; Jonathan (Candace) Nelson; Katie (Scott) Claxton; Paul (Ashley Gumz) Fischer; Ryan (Elyse) Sienko; Laura Sienko; Meghan (Josh) Tompkins; Amy (Jake) Higgins; Amelia Fischer; Abram, Laura & Francis Pineda-Fischer, Daniel, Heidi & Caleb Meier, Ben & Katherine Fischer; and 15 great grandchildren; siblings: George (Rosie) Ernst, Chuck (Pat) Ernst, Dennis (Shirley) Ernst, Jerome (Sherelyn), Cathy (Dave) Huberty; siblings-in-law: Sr. Rita Mae, FSPA, Margie (Bernie) Kersting, Eugene (Joanne), Mark (Pila), Mary (Joe) Terwey; and many beloved extended family. She was preceded in death by her parents; brother and sister-in-law, Louis and Doris Ernst; father/mother-in-law Cyril and Mae (Heim) Fischer; brother/sister-in-law Donald & Joan Fischer, son-in-law Michael Sienko.

A Mass celebrating Irene's life will be held on Wednesday, December 12, 2018 at 11:00am at Annunciation Catholic Church in Mayhew Lake, with lunch to follow. Burial will be in the parish cemetery. Visitation will be 4:00 – 7:00pm on Tuesday, December 11 at Williams Dingmann Funeral Home in Sauk Rapids, as well as one hour prior to Mass at the church. In lieu of flowers, memorials preferred to Sharing and Caring Hands, Minneapolis, MN. The family extends heartfelt thanks to the staff at Pioneer Village of Country Manor in Sartell for their loving care and service to Irene and her family during the final months of her life.

Obituary and guest book available online at: [www.williamsdingmann.com](http://www.williamsdingmann.com)

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## Burgeson

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that the deer carcass was likely placed by a hunter, that hunters carry guns, and that this was a message being sent to him that he was not welcome in the community.”

Daniel Dorian Knowlen has since been charged with contributing to the delinquency of a child, after admitting to police that his 14-year-old son placed the carcasses on the cars while he watched.

The incident has been unsettling. The story has gone viral on social media and damaged the reputation of our entire community. While the police found no evidence that Knowlen targeted cars driven by Somalis, the possibility that this was a hate crime has been part of the conversation.

Some of the comments on Facebook have ridiculed the Somali men for their fears. One comment suggested, if this were a hate crime, the perpetrator would have used a pig carcass.

The incident has also inspired positive reactions from more thoughtful

people in our community.

UniteCloud, a grassroots organization working to reduce tensions and build empathetic, cross-cultural understanding, collected cards and letters expressing support and welcoming to the Somali men.

I might add, given Brandmire's call for dialog, that UniteCloud has been promoting respectful community dialog for some time, most recently on Nov. 17 with a panel discussion and community dinner hosted by Atonement Lutheran Church.

The event, which drew a packed house, featured four panelists who answered questions about their Muslim faith and their experiences as immigrants living in St. Cloud.

In the spirit of hospitality and open dialog I witnessed at that forum, I welcome Brandmire to his new role on the St. Cloud City Council, where he will encounter colleagues who share his commitment to making St. Cloud a great city.

*This is the opinion of St. Cloud resident Glenda Burgeson, whose column is published the second Sunday of the month.*

## Feld

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Virginia. Army recruits from those states are generally in poorer condition than those from other parts of the country.

About 18.5 percent of our young people between ages 2 and 19 are considered obese. Some jurisdictions attempted to legislate their way out of obesity by taxing sugar laden beverages, but it hasn't solved the problem.

Everyone can justify their excuses for obesity like I did – I have battled weight problems my entire life. Before this bout with obesity, I probably had lost nearly 300 pounds in several large weight loss programs since high school. But I always returned to my dangerous ways.

However, this time it was different, as I topped out at a disturbing 330 pounds. Sure, my back injury and bad knees kept me from exercising, but I still had to eat. Right?

As I had a serious heart attack in 2009, I was well aware of the dangers of obesity and cholesterol on my heart, so I should have been aware of where I was headed. But I used the same plan most overweight people use. I will start my diet tomorrow. But tomorrow never came.

Facing diabetes and several other medical issues, my doctor ordered me

to lose 50-80 pounds. As there is a history of diabetes in my family, I knew what my alternatives were.

In July of 2017, my wife and I went to work correcting the problem. We cleaned out the cupboards of high-sugar items like breakfast cereals, baking ingredients, canned fruit in heavy syrups and anything containing high fructose corn syrup.

We began reading labels before purchasing anything containing sugar, high carbohydrates, sodium and high cholesterol. We became friends with vegetables, fruits, chicken, turkey and other low fat foods, and the weight began to come off.

Although my back and knees painfully protested, I began exercising, as my goal was to drop 100 pounds.

Although the changes we made have to last forever, the desires remain to consume the foods that helped pack on the weight. I have been addicted to sugar my entire life, becoming a serious sweet-oholic. Regrettably, I have not found any foods that satisfy those cravings and probably never will.

Losing those 100 pounds was great, but I must always remain vigilant to those unhealthy eating habits that can send my weight back up.

*This is the opinion of Gerry Feld, a lifelong Central Minnesota resident whose column is published the second Sunday of the month. He writes mostly about national issues from a conservative perspective.*

## Our View

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leading the U.S. Senate decided to eliminate filibusters for most nominations by presidents.

With enough Republicans dug in against several judicial nominations from President Obama, they used a little-known parliamentary move to allow these nominees and presidential appointments to be confirmed by a simple majority, not the 60-vote supermajority in place for decades.

Granted, Senate Democrats achieved their short-term goal then. But it sure came back to haunt them with the recent Republican appointments of Brett Kavanaugh and Neil M. Gorsuch to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Given such caustic political maneuvers, it's no wonder countless rank-and-file Americans not only despise and distrust today's elected leaders, but look wistfully back – either through personal experience or history books – at the leadership style embraced by George H.W. Bush.

He likely will not be seen as one of



**Former President George H.W. Bush arrives on the South Lawn of White House in 2007. Bush died Nov. 30, 2018, about eight months after the death of his wife, Barbara Bush. He was 94.** LAWRENCE JACKSON, AP FILE

this nation's greatest presidents. But it's sad to think he might have been among the last in an era to draw a bright line between being a president leading a country and a politician protecting an ideology.

*This is the opinion of the Times Editorial Board: News Director Lisa Schwarz, Content Strategist Randy Krebs and Content Coach Andrew Fraser.*

## Buchanan

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rack Obama, for instance, instituted a “catch and release” program for border enforcement that gave a pass to illegal immigrants breaching our border. These executive actions directly encouraged countless more illegal immigrants – many of them unaccompanied minor children – to make the dangerous trek northward from Mexico and Central America.

That weakness ended when Trump took office. Faced with the massive humanitarian crisis posed by mass illegal immigration, he responded with “zero tolerance” policies, pledges to send the military to protect the border and more recently, plans for tent cities to house offenders. Trump has also vowed to end the misguided practice of “birth-right citizenship” that is based on an erroneous reading of the 14th Amendment.

That confident strength is equally evident in Trump's dealings on the world stage. The American people elected a deal maker who would fight for their place in the global economy, and he hasn't disappointed.

Trump has also demonstrated strength through restraint, most impressively with his measured response to the outrageous, contrived assault Democrats unleashed on Supreme

Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh. When Kavanaugh was threatened with ruin, infamy and disgrace merely so that Democrats could try to control the Supreme Court with only a minority in the U.S. Senate, Trump stood solidly behind his nominee, insisting that Kavanaugh would ultimately be vindicated by the process, as indeed he was.

It's a sad commentary on American political culture that another president likely would have withdrawn Kavanaugh's nomination, denying him not only a seat on the Supreme Court, but also the opportunity to clear his name. A more timid president would have hung Justice Kavanaugh out to dry in order to save his own reputation. Trump instead burnished his reputation by refusing to let the Democrats destroy Brett Kavanaugh.

Rather than fretting about offending a particular voting block, Trump has done what he felt was right, to the greatest extent of his constitutional authority, and trusted that the people would see the wisdom of his decisions.

Where traditional politicians vacillate on difficult issues, Donald Trump has shown remarkable strength and initiative, which has proved especially potent as the president has overturned political and strategic norms at home and abroad. The timing was right for America. Trump is the right man for the job with the strength we need.

*This is the opinion of Bay Buchanan, former U.S. treasurer.*