



Carolyn H. Chitester

October 26, 1922 - June 26, 2017

For the last 70 years, you could find her tidying up the roadside produce market where her farm's wares were on display for sale: corn, tomatoes, apples, cantaloupes, okra.

You name it, and Mrs. C. offered it up with a smile, her own "serving of sunshine."

And, if someone asked for a dozen ears of corn, they'd find 13 or 14 stuffed in the bag when they got home.

Customers had to pay for the fruits and vegetables, but the smiles, stories and advice were free, along with the warm hugs Mrs. C. dispensed cheerfully to anyone, especially family, friends and the oak trees she revered as part of her Lithuanian cultural heritage.

Every summer, from 1946 until 2016, Mrs. C., Carolyn Helen (Widzenas) Chitester, greeted all who entered the stand—one of Burlington County's oldest "field direct to roadside" markets—until the effects of advanced age and illness intervened.

On Monday, June 26, Mrs. C. passed away at Lourdes Medical Center in Willingboro with her children by her side. She was 94.

Carolyn was born in 1922 in a humble cabin in Delran to Lithuanian immigrants, Brun and Antanina (Ruksnaitis) Widzenas. Five years later, the family purchased a dairy farm in what is now Burlington Township.

Carolyn spent her childhood there as a hardworking farm girl along with her brother Frank and sister Eve. She remained proud of her agrarian and

Lithuanian roots her entire life, instilling the associated values of kindness, honesty and industriousness in her children and grandchildren.

During WWII, Carolyn held several jobs to support the war effort, most notably as a Mt. Holly Bell Telephone switchboard operator, where she quickly rose to shift supervisor. She often recalled being at work the day President Franklin Roosevelt died.

“The telephone switchboards lit up like Christmas trees,” she’d say.

After the war, Carolyn married local boy and navy veteran, Charles E. Chitester, in 1945. The newlyweds bought their own land, Fernwood Springs Farm, in Westampton Township the following year. Now as “Mrs. C.,” she again became the dedicated full-time farm girl, as she and Charles developed their produce business and raised three children: Carol, John, and Jeanne. In addition to hugging her beloved oak trees in the farm’s woods (or wherever else she found them), Mrs. C. became an avid bird watcher and flower grower. Zinnias were her favorites, and she added cut flowers to the farm stand’s produce repertoire.

While keeping the farm running, Charles also held down a shift-work job at Burlington’s Public Service Electric and Gas, which meant that Carolyn deftly juggled his schedule, the needs of three children, the farm work, and daily retail operations at the stand.

Yet, somehow she retained an easy and somewhat salty sense of humor. Her Kirk Douglas impressions were spot on. On rare occasions, when someone said something that tickled her funny bone, she laughed until she cried. Well into her 80s, she’d hop on the farm’s quad vehicle and drive herself around the fields—or jump into a motorcycle sidecar for a spin around town with her son’s friend, Max. And, every New Year’s Eve without fail, she roused John to accompany her across the dark backyard to ring the farm bell at midnight. However, Mrs. C.’s real talent was that she was personable, compassionate, kind-hearted and caring – qualities she showered selflessly on all who knew her, touching the lives of generations of local families. She loved farm life, her family, classical music, and teaching her grandchildren and great-

grandchildren about the wonders of nature.

Mrs. C. was preceded in death by her parents, her siblings, and her husband, Charles. She is survived by her son, John, who remains on the farm; daughters Carol (Chitester) Saynisch (Stephen) of Steilacoom, Wash. and Jeanne (Chitester) Stinger (the late William), of Palm Coast Fla.; grandchildren Megan Saynisch (Michael Nesi) of Brooklyn, N.Y. and Geoffrey Saynisch of Steilacoom, Wash; two great-grandchildren, Luca and Poppy Nesi; and nephews, nieces, extended family and close friends.

“Labos nakties, Mrs. C. Matyti tave danguje.” (“Good night, Mrs. C. See you in heaven.”)

Viewing Wed., July 5, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. at Perinchief Chapels, 438 High St., Mt. Holly, N.J.; final viewing, Thurs., July 6, 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. with funeral service at 11 a.m. at Perinchief Chapels; internment following, at Brig. Gen. William C. Doyle Memorial Cemetery, 350 Province Line Rd., Wrightstown, N.J. The funeral procession will drive by Fernwood Springs Farm en route to the cemetery.

Mrs. C.’s family would like to extend a special, heartfelt thank you to the nurses, physicians and staff at Lourdes Medical Center’s ICU and CCU units, as well as to homecare physical therapists Fares, Lauren and Ed, and homecare aids DeeDee, Maria Luisa and Elsy.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Mrs. C.’s name to The Raptor Trust, 1390 White Bridge Rd, Millington, NJ 07946 email: info@theraptortrust.com; or Lourdes Health Foundation, Guardian Angels Program, 1600 Haddon Ave., Camden, N.J. 08103

Cemetery Details

BGWCD Veteran's Memorial Cemetery

350 Provinceline Rd.,
Wrightstown, NJ

Previous Events

Visitation

JUL 5. 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM (ET)

Perinchief Chapels
438 High Street
Mt. Holly, NJ 08060
(609) 267-0399
info@perinchief.com
<http://www.perinchief.com>

Visitation

JUL 6. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Perinchief Chapels
438 High Street
Mt. Holly, NJ 08060
(609) 267-0399
info@perinchief.com
<http://www.perinchief.com>

Service

JUL 6. 11:00 AM - 11:30 AM (ET)

Perinchief Chapels

438 High Street

Mt. Holly, NJ 08060

(609) 267-0399

info@perinchief.com

<http://www.perinchief.com>

Tribute Wall



“ Carolyn H. Chitester

October 29, 2022 at 11:57 AM



“ Carolyn H. Chitester

October 29, 2022 at 09:53 AM



“ 1 file added to the album *New Album Name*



Carol Saynisch - July 13, 2017 at 10:32 AM



“ 1 file added to the album *New Album Name*



Carol Saynisch - July 13, 2017 at 10:31 AM

CS

“ 1 file added to the album *New Album Name*



Carol Saynisch - July 13, 2017 at 10:29 AM

CS

“ 1 file added to the album *New Album Name*



Carol Saynisch - July 13, 2017 at 10:27 AM

MV

“ *My family patronized the farm from the time I was a child. I later brought my children there, and have nice memories of not only the produce, but of chatting with your mother. My mother and I were just talking about that recently when I passed the stand. May fond memories give your comfort.*

Melissa Vance - July 06, 2017 at 03:33 PM

 Pat
Rainier

“ *Jeanne I am so sorry for your loss. Your mom sounds like an amazing woman!!*

Pat Rainier - July 02, 2017 at 07:43 AM