

# *The Normandy Times*

*March 2020* Editor-in-Chief/Layout Design, Lori Lancaster



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**May love and laughter light your days,  
And warm your heart and home.  
May good and faithful friends be yours,  
Wherever you may roam.  
May peace and plenty bless your world  
With joy that long endures.  
May all life's passing seasons  
Bring the best to you and yours.**

# RESIDENT OF THE MONTH

## *Dolores Lenore Polk*



She's had a song in her heart her entire life. Singing has always been something Dolores loved. From taking voice lessons when she was young, singing in organized groups or spontaneously singing out during the day, it was something that came naturally to her.

Dolores was born October 30, 1928 and she always called it, "cabbage night," which was the night before Halloween. Her mother Madalyn was from a large Polish family, the youngest of ten children. Her father George came to America from Greece in 1914. The original family name was Paravou but Madalyn changed it when teachers had trouble with the spelling. Dolores's younger sister Marianne became quite good at the piano, perhaps destined to accompany her older sister!

This very close family of four lived near St. Stephen's Parish on Cleveland's



West Side. George worked on the railroad, the New York Central, most of his life. Madalyn took care of all household duties. But Madalyn had something most women of the day didn't have, a driver's license. And she became the unofficial driver for all the Notre Dame nuns at St. Stephen's, leaving an impression on Dolores she would never forget.

In addition to school, Dolores took voice and tap-dancing lessons. And at St. Stephen's High School she studied and became excellent at shorthand and typing which prepared her for secretarial work when she graduated in 1946.

She worked at Werner G. Smith, as an executive secretary, but was still involved in social activities around the church. It was at a social event at St. Patrick's on Bridge Avenue, where Dolores met the man who would become the love of her life and husband of sixty-three years. Tom Polk was two years older and had grown up in nearby St. Michael's Parish on West 25<sup>th</sup> Street. A veteran of World War II, both he and

Dolores were members of the Catholic Young Men and Women's organization. They sang together in the club's events. But there's little doubt the goal of anyone in this group was to find a spouse! And Dolores often joked that Tom was so shy, she had to propose! Well, almost. She said he couldn't find the right words and she finally asked, "Are you trying to ask me to marry you?" He nodded, yes. She received her engagement ring the night before the big snow of 1950, and the next day Tom walked all the way from his family home on Vega to her house to help shovel snow. She said she thinks he was protecting his investment.



Tom and Dolores were inseparable. He was one of six children and family gatherings seemed to happen every weekend. They were married, June 2, 1951 and became an amazing symbol of the perfect marriage. If there were any rough spots they didn't show. They were completely dedicated and faithful to one another.

Dolores was still working when she found out she was going to have a baby. She stopped at her mother's house right after the doctor appointment. Madalyn told her to call her boss and say she was quitting. Right now! Right or wrong, it was something many women did at the time.

It was June 13, 1952 when an eight-pound little boy was born to Tom and Dolores at the old Fairview hospital near Franklin Avenue. Back then dads were not permitted in delivery, but when Tom finally walked into her recovery room, Dolores looked at him and said, "Our little Tommy." He was finally given the name Tomas George to honor both her husband and father. He was their only child.



In 1955, Tom and Dolores bought a brand-new home in the developing West Park neighborhood near Cleveland Hopkins Airport. The house was actually within walking distance of the old Puritas Springs Amusement Park. This little family moved in and stayed more than fifty years. As members of St. Patrick's West Park, life became as busy as you might expect for a family experiencing all the change that took place over the next half century. Dolores did not work outside the home and had little time for any organized singing. But that never stopped her from singing around the house.



Eventually Dolores's mom and dad, along with her now married sister Marianne, all lived within walking distance of one another in the same area. It was a blessed time of family closeness that so many other families were never lucky enough to enjoy. Tom and Dolores knew few things in life were as important as faith, family and friends. And they came to enjoy two grandchildren, Alicia and Kristina.

The years flew by quickly and Dolores eventually volunteered for work at Manor Care Nursing Home on Rocky River Drive. It was an experience that taught her amazing respect for the elderly. She often worked in the beauty salon and displayed an incredible talent for talking with and calming the residents. And formal singing returned to her life. Tom and Dolores became members of the Golden Tones; a singing group that volunteered their time to sing at nursing homes all over Cleveland. Several times they appeared at Normandy!

Life was not without tragedy. Tom was diagnosed with chondrosarcoma of the right hip and lost his leg to this rare cancer in the year 2000. He underwent the ordeal of hemipelvectomy surgery but his unflinching spirit and the outstanding care of Dolores kept him active and involved for many, many years afterward. They even continued signing with the Golden Tones, performing a romantic duet in harmony that always

brought the audience to tears.

Dolores lost Tom to chronic heart failure the day after Christmas 2015. It was the end of a storybook marriage and her heart was broken. The first year after his passing Dolores had the strength to keep going. But dementia and Alzheimer's began far too quickly.

Singing may be Dolores' passion but anyone who really knew her would say she lived a message of unconditional love. Love of family, love of children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews, and a very deep love for her husband. It's very easy to say her life has been a beautiful song wishing everyone could be as blessed as she's been.

#### Additional photos for D. Polk



## Mardi Gras Celebration with Johnny Pastirik

Johnny



Sandy Riley



Janice Kemp



## Family Members

As Spring approaches our thoughts often include spring cleaning. Please exchange winter clothing for lighter weight summer clothing in your loved ones' closet and dresser. It is a good time to simplify the items on dressers, nightstands, shelves, ledges and on top of the closet. It always feels good to see only a few meaningful items out as we do in our home space. It may be a good time to change these items out and donate excess.

Please make sure all clothing is labeled and has been added to the inventory list. This labeling policy includes clothing that families' launder outside the facility. If not labeled, you may do this by taking them to the nurses' station. We will label and return them to the resident. Please also check labels on other items such as lotion, shampoo, stuffed animals, blankets, etc.

Items that can be given to donation centers as Savers and Goodwill can be bagged or boxed then taken to the Activities Department on the 500 hall. Donations of stuffed animals, necklaces and bracelets will be accepted for Bingo prizes.

# Normandy Care Center Staff

Administrator	Julie Bauman
Admissions Director	Faith Griffin
Activities Director	Tammy Danilovic
Administrative Assistant	Cindy Ward
Controller	David Rodgers
Dietary Manager	Colleen Merella
Dietitian	Sandee Seib
Environmental Services And Maintenance	Curtis Cole
Rehab Services Director	Ellen Straub
Social Work	Ginny Moes Laurie DeHaan



Send an e-mail message  
to any of our residents at:

[activities@normandyretirement.com](mailto:activities@normandyretirement.com)

We will deliver any messages  
**same day.**



*"Happy Birthday to You"*

*Residents' March  
Birthdays*



<i>Gerry Vandever</i>	<i>Mar. 2<sup>nd</sup></i>
<i>Patricia Strauss</i>	<i>Mar. 5<sup>th</sup></i>
<i>Clark Moore</i>	<i>Mar. 6<sup>th</sup></i>
<i>Marie Prokop</i>	<i>Mar. 6<sup>th</sup></i>
<i>Jeannette Winkel</i>	<i>Mar. 7<sup>th</sup></i>
<i>Barbara Mathaios</i>	<i>Mar. 8<sup>th</sup></i>
<i>Rita Samstag</i>	<i>Mar. 9<sup>th</sup></i>
<i>Janice Kemp</i>	<i>Mar. 14<sup>th</sup></i>
<i>Nicholas Marcano</i>	<i>Mar. 16<sup>th</sup></i>
<i>Patricia Horner</i>	<i>Mar. 20<sup>th</sup></i>