



Irene Cullen

July 12, 1926 - October 21, 2025

Irene Cullen, age 99, of Peoria, Illinois, passed away peacefully on October 21, 2025, surrounded by her loving family.

Born on July 12, 1926, in Peoria to Herman F. and Helen E. (Klassert) Hellrigel, Irene lived a long and beautiful life, outliving nearly everyone she knew and leaving behind a legacy of strength, resilience, and joy.

On May 3, 1958, Irene married the love of her life, Thomas J. Cullen, and together they shared 41 wonderful years of marriage before his passing. They were members of St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church and active participants in the Knights of Columbus. Known for their incredible dancing skills, Irene and Tom were always the life of the party and the center of every dance floor. Even decades later, Irene could still out-dance everyone at the nursing home—and she knew it.

Irene was the proud and loving mother of Dori (Jack) Garrison and Kim (Randy) Hunzeker, cherished grandmother of six, and adored great-grandmother of ten. Her family was her greatest pride and joy.

She was preceded in death by her parents, her beloved husband Tom, five sisters, one brother, and many dear friends.

Irene's 99 years were a true gift. Her toughness inspired everyone who knew

her, her humor kept us smiling, and her love held her family together. She leaves behind not only beautiful memories but a lasting example of what it means to live fully, love deeply, and dance through life with joy.

A private family Funeral Mass celebrating Irene's life will be held at St. Philomena Catholic Church, with burial to follow at Resurrection Mausoleum. Schmidt-Haller Burial and Cremation Service is in charge of cremation.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to TAPS, No-Kill Animal Shelter. Words of comfort can be shared with the family at www.SchmidtHaller.com.

Tribute Wall

LS

“ I will always remember how beautiful Aunt Irene was, inside and out. Her and Uncle Tom are dancing together again. Know you all are in our prayers. Lynn (Lynnette Cullen) Stahl and family

Lynn (Lynnette Cullen) Stahl - October 28, 2025 at 03:30 PM

JC

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Jacqueline Cooley - October 28, 2025 at 03:25 PM

JC

“ All my Family when I told them she had passed stated she was their favorite

Jacqueline Cooley - October 28, 2025 at 03:21 PM

JC

“ The thing I remember when I visited my Aunt was her coffee she always offered me, it always have coffee grounds in it but I never told her

Jacqueline Cooley - October 28, 2025 at 03:17 PM

JD

“ Please accept our deepest sympathies, Irene was a class act and so beautiful inside and out .
David Garrison and family

Jan DuBre - October 28, 2025 at 01:07 PM

DB

“ *Dori, Jack, Cole, Luke, and Ali, I really enjoyed getting to know your Mom and Grandma! I will always remember how nice she looked when she was going out for lunch with her pearl necklace on! Such a beautiful lady, I always enjoyed visiting with her! You all meant so much to her! She is now with her husband and all of her sisters and brother! God bless you all! Diane and Gary Bussman*

Diane Bussman - October 27, 2025 at 08:38 PM