



## Bessie V. (Vasilas) Sifakis

July 2, 1924 - January 12, 2022

AYER: Bessie V. (Vasilas) Sifakis, 97, a former longtime Ayer resident died Wednesday, January 12, 2022 at the Caldwell Home, Fitchburg.

Mrs. Sifakis was born in Nashua, NH July 2, 1924, a daughter of Greek immigrants Nicholas and Maria (Dramas) Vasilas and grew up in Nashua, NH. She was a graduate of Nashua High School where she excelled in sports and in one basketball game scored 42 points. Bessie loved to work and as a teenager and was employed by Benson's Wild Animal Farm in Hudson, NH where she cared for, trained and performed shows with wild animals.

During World War II Bessie moved to Detroit, Michigan to live with her Uncle Stephan and work in his restaurant that was booming because of the war effort. After the war she married Emmanuel "Manny" Sifakis and moved to Ayer where they took over management of her father in law's Restaurant, Tony's Ayer Spa, that was located on Main Street. She retired in 1999.

Besides raising children and working at the restaurant, Bessie served on the the Ayer Library Board of Trustees and worked the election polling stations for many years for the town. She enjoyed gardening, bowling, was a great sports fan and a great cook. She was a terrific "Yaiya " for her seven grandchildren

She was predeceased by her husband, Manuel A. Sifakis in 2002, her son

Mark Sifakis of Ayer in 1974, her sisters, Helen Bertsimas of Nashua, NH and Angela Kent of Ohio.

She leaves two sons, Nicholas Sifakis and his fiancée, Jan Rutkowski of Florida, Stephen Sifakis and his wife Susan, of Lancaster; her daughter, Mary Ellen Diggs and her husband, Paul, of Ayer; her brother, James Vasilis of Hawaii and seven grandchildren, Alexander Sifakis, Anthony Sifakis, Andrew Sifakis, Nicholas Sifakis, Jr., Abraham Sifakis, Robert Sifakis and Rebecca Whitney.

Mrs. Sifakis' will have a private family graveside service at Woodlawn Cemetery, Ayer.

The Anderson Funeral Home, 25 Fitchburg Road, Ayer is assisting the family with arrangements.

# Cemetery Details

## Woodlawn Cemetery

Harvard Road  
Ayer, MA 01432  
[info@andersonfuneral.com](mailto:info@andersonfuneral.com)

# Tribute Wall

KJ

“ *My Condolences to Steve, Nick & Mary Ellen and family. Bessie always had a warm smile for everyone. She will be missed.* ”

**Karen Januskiewicz** - January 19, 2022 at 09:16 PM

SM

“ *Shelley And Kurt Migrants lit a candle in memory of Bessie V. (Vasilas) Sifakis* ”



**Shelley and Kurt Migrants** - January 19, 2022 at 08:26 PM



“ *European Sympathy Dish Garden was purchased for the family of Bessie V. (Vasilas) Sifakis.* ”



January 19, 2022 at 11:19 AM

MM

“ *During the many years I worked at Tony's, Bessie was just wonderful and always kind. Bessie and Manny taught me how to have a good work ethic and that any worth doing, was worth doing well. Rest In Peace, Bessie. My condolences to The family.* ”

**Maureen McCarthy** - January 17, 2022 at 09:00 PM

TH

“ *Mary Ellen, Nick, Steve & families;  
My deepest sympathies on the passing of your mom. I have many wonderful memories of Bessie. From years of banter over meals and coffees, to learning the right way to do the Greek Dance in the Trojan Room and so many more. My thoughts & prayers are with her and all of you.*  
*Terry Hurley.*

---

**terry hurley** - January 15, 2022 at 07:31 PM

BO

“ *Bessie was an awesome and sweet woman and will be missed.*  
*Bill Oelfke*

---

**Bill Oelfke** - January 14, 2022 at 12:21 PM

DS

“ *My condolences to Nick, Stephen, Mary Ellen & all family members. I remember going into Tony's after school in the 60's...a bunch of us.*  
*We would order fries & a soda & sit there & play the juke box. We were having fun, but, you probably could not wait for us to leave! And, then I worked for you & Manny in the 90's. I loved it there & was so sad when you decided to close up. Bessie, you were beautiful inside & out. Now, you are back with your husband.*

---

**Denise Stepleton** - January 14, 2022 at 11:48 AM

RW

“ 6 files added to the tribute wall



Rebecca Whitney - January 14, 2022 at 10:55 AM

GR

“ Ας είναι αιωνία η μνήμη τους (May their memory be eternal) Greg and Liz Nonis

Greg - January 13, 2022 at 07:53 PM

NS

“ Nancy Sherwin lit a candle in memory of Bessie V. (Vasilas) Sifakis



Nancy Sherwin - January 13, 2022 at 07:47 PM

LN

“ Laurie & Jim Nehring lit a candle in memory of Bessie V. (Vasilas) Sifakis



Laurie & Jim Nehring - January 13, 2022 at 07:04 PM

LA

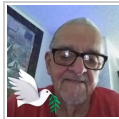
*Our Dear Neighbor- You walked our neighborhood each and every day, past the 'new' houses and the 'new' cul-de-sac.. well, new to you, anyhow! You chatted with us, just to touch base and find out 'what's going on'. You knew ALL of us, and you knew our children too. You helped them grow up, and supported all of us during happy times and troubled times. Your light will missed on High Street, Winthrop and Highland Ave, but you live on in our hearts and memories.*

**Laurie** - January 13, 2022 at 07:09 PM

RR

*“ Like a second Mother, always warm, welcoming and not afraid to keep us in line when needed. Sifakis's was a second home both in Ayer and summers at Fort Pond. I smile when thinking Bessie, and will miss her smile. My regards and love to her family. Rick Ressijac*

**Rick Ressijac** - January 13, 2022 at 01:49 PM



*Many cups of coffee when u had store on Main St. Tony s was the place. RIP Bessie*

**Albert Wendling** - January 13, 2022 at 07:59 PM

SS

*Rest in Peace - wonderful Bessie- You & Manny were my "Greek parents for the many yrs I work for you - you will always be in my heart*

**sherri silvestre** - January 13, 2022 at 08:40 PM

CM

*Nick,I have wonderful memories of Deb and I coming over to the Sifakis home. Your mom always welcomed us with a warm smile, great food and conversation. I will remember that always. Thinking of you and your family in prayer and friendship. Rest in Peace dear Bessie. Cathy ( Nolan ) McMullen*

**Cathy McMullen** - January 14, 2022 at 08:43 AM

DW

*Nick, Stephen, MaryEllen and family - How sad I am to learn of Bessie's passing. What a lovely woman. Having grown up at the Spa since old enough to walk, I remember how loving and attentive Bessie was to all who walked through the door. I know my folks thought the world of Bessie, as did I. How fortunate you were to have her in your lives for so long. May she be at peace and may your memories bring smiles where tears shed today.*

*Fondly - Deb Williams*

---

**Deb Williams** - January 19, 2022 at 11:23 AM

SM

*We are all so sorry to hear of your mom's passing. She was a very sweet lady and will be missed by all. Our thought and prayers are with and may she Rest In Peace 🙏*

*The Mauro Family/Tiny's Restaurant*

---

**Sharon Mauro** - January 28, 2022 at 02:19 PM