

Paulick, Elizabeth

Elizabeth Paulick, who as a young mother faced hardship but never hardened, died Thursday after suffering a heart attack. She was 83 and lived in Dearborn. Born Elizabeth Duthie McWatt in Detroit's Harper-Van Dyke neighborhood, Mrs. Paulick was the eldest of five children. Her parents were Scottish immigrants, a point of pride for Mrs. Paulick, who loved travel and often extolled her heritage. Mrs. Paulick graduated from Northeastern High School and attended Wayne State University. She left after a year so her family could afford to send one of her brothers to college. A striking woman, Mrs. Paulick met her future husband, Franz Erich, after her employers at the Schmidt Noodle Co. began taking her to social events in Detroit's German community. The couple married in 1939 and moved to East Detroit, now Eastpointe. When Mr. Paulick died of cancer in 1951, Mrs. Paulick's energy and drive became a force of nature. Mrs. Paulick, who had previously pedaled to the market with her son riding on the handlebars of her bike, learned to drive. She sold greeting cards door to door. She became a Brownie and Girl Scout leader. "She had my sister and I convinced that the best way to grow flowers was to plant them by moonlight, because she would work all day and come home to take care of her children and the house," said Ernest Paulick, one of Mrs. Paulick's two children. In about 1953, Mrs. Paulick joined Jac-Ro Die & Engineering, and over the next 30 years established herself as a force at the firm and in the business community. In 1973, Mrs. Paulick was named Businesswoman of the Year by the American Business Women's Association. She also belonged to Executive Women International. Confident but not conceited, Mrs. Paulick had a regal air without royal pretensions. One of her greatest traits was a passion for people. "When you talk about my mother's family, it's not just blood relations," Ernest Paulick said. "She had such an extended family of friends - and the children of those friends." Many of them regularly received calls or cards. And there were more than a few generous checks, too. It was perhaps a friend of Mrs. Paulick's who, in a birthday card, best summed up what she meant to so many: "How much I have learned from you over these past 13 years, not so much through what you have said, because you don't preach, but more importantly and certainly more effectively by your wonderful example. "You have taught me the courage of a woman for the forgiveness and patience that is possible to achieve, and the wisdom of focusing on the good in situations rather than enlarging negative aspects." In addition to her son, survivors also include a daughter, Margaret Watson; a sister; three brothers; two grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. A memorial service will be at 2 p.m. on Aug. 19 at the Metropolitan Methodist Church, 8000 Woodward in Detroit. As written by M. L. Elrick and printed in the Detroit Free Press on July 3.