



## Halyna Bycia Bilyk

September 22, 1925 - April 25, 2022

Halyna (Bycia) Bilyk, 96, died peacefully April 25th, at the home of her daughter, Tamara Spafford and her son-in-law, Patrick Spafford in Georgia where she had lived for the past 25 years.

Halyna was born in September of 1925 in the Chernihiv area of Ukraine. She lived through the atrocities of Stalin and the imposed famine of 1932-3 in Ukraine (Holodomor). During the war years she was forced to work in occupied Poland and subsequently, at the end of WWII, ended up in a Displaced Persons Camp in Austria. While attending pre-med classes at the University of Innsbruck she met Roman, a fellow Ukrainian refugee. They fell in love and married so that they could be together as refugees were boarding ships to other countries that would receive them. Halyna and Roman immigrated to Buenos Aires, Argentina where they started a family with the birth of their son, Alexander (Lesyk). After 8 years in Argentina, Halyna and Roman were able to save up enough money to buy airline tickets to Miami and bus tickets to Rochester, New York and join extended family.

Life in Rochester centered around family, the Ukrainian community and on providing the best life and education for their two children. Halyna was employed at the University of Rochester's Strong Memorial Hospital as a laboratory technician for the Neuropathology department. In 1988, Halyna retired to lovingly help take care of her granddaughter, Katya. Her most joyous time was to be with her grandchildren: Adrian, Jeremy, Stefan, Katya and Alexandra. Her name endearingly became "Bycia" to all. She also was

fortunate to live to see her 4 great-grandchildren: Nicholas, Melania, Matthew, and Elaina, her namesake.

She is survived by her daughter, Tamara Spafford and her husband, Pat Spafford of Canton, Georgia; her son Alex Bilyk and his wife Christina Cherwinsky of Toronto, Ontario; her grandson Adrian Bilyk and his wife Adrianna Bilyk of Toronto, Ontario; her grandson Jeremy Spafford of Eugene, Oregon; her grandson Stefan Bilyk of Chicago, Illinois; her granddaughter Katya Glass and her husband Zack Glass of Alpharetta, Georgia and her granddaughter Alexandra Spafford of Canton, Georgia.

Halyna will be buried next to Roman at Arlington Cemetery in Atlanta, Georgia. A memorial service will be held for Halyna Bilyk at the Alpharetta Presbyterian Church at 10 am on May 7th. Following services, a "Celebration of Life" reception will be held at the home of Pat and Tamara Spafford. In lieu of flowers, contributions can be made to The Lionheart School, <https://thelionheartschool.com/make-a-gift-form>

# Previous Events

## Memorial Service

MAY 7. 10:00 AM (ET)

Alpharetta Presbyterian Church  
180 Academy St.  
Alpharetta, GA

# Tribute Wall



“ *Halyna Bycia Bilyk*

October 08, 2022 at 11:37 AM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Halyna Bycia Bilyk.*



May 06, 2022 at 08:57 AM



“ *Pink Tribute Spray was purchased for the family of Halyna Bycia Bilyk.*



May 05, 2022 at 10:37 PM

AP

“ Dear Tamara, Lesyk and Families, I am truly bereft at this news of Halya's passing. We chatted regularly, sharing stories of the past, happy times enjoyed with you and Roman, your wonderful father. I missed her call recently and as fate would have it, life got in the way and I was delayed in following up with a call to her. Over the years, she became the sister I never had and although we were only distantly related through my late cherished sister-in-law Hanusia, we considered ourselves family. I will miss her so. One of her greatest joys were her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She was so proud of all of you. How truly blessed and happy she felt to have lived to meet the "great-grandies". Life presented her with so many challenges and yet I never heard her complain. She met them head on with faith and resolve. Halya was an inspiration. May she rest in peace as she is now reunited with Roman, the love of her life.

*Vichnaya Pamyat!*

*With deepest sympathy and love,*

*Lesia Paliyenko and family*

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**Alexandra Paliyenko** - May 05, 2022 at 03:24 PM

PP

“ Dear Bilyk & Spafford families.

*Our thoughts are with you.*

*Your mom/ Bycia was one of the women from a group of valiant women whose quiet determination created the safe space for their children to grow and have the self confidence to go out into the world and thrive.*

*A eulogy comes to mind that is poignant and elegant. I was given by a Rabbi.*

*The ones that crossed the ocean and brought with them the villages of Ukraine*

*How we struggled & how we fought for the family*

*Descendants of this immigrant woman, you don't grow up an American*

*You do not live in America. No such place exists*

*Your clay is the clay of some Selo*

*You're an heir of the steppes*

*Because she carried that old world on her back across the ocean in a boat*

*And she put it down on Norton Ave, Rochester*

*You can never make that crossing that she made*

*For such great voyages in this world do not anymore exist*

*But every day of your lives the miles of the voyage from that place to this one*

*You cross every day*

*You understand me.*

*In you, that journey is*

*Love*

*Andrea Mozharivska & Peter Palijenko*

*Toronto Canada*

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**Peter Palijenko** - May 05, 2022 at 12:34 PM