

Our Family News Letter

Issue 133

Greendale, Wisconsin

JUN 2026

Cecelia Mae Heck, (nee Catrine) 1935 - 2026

We were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Cel, the heart and soul of the Heck Family Picnic from 1969 through 2025. That was 56 years of consecutive family gatherings starting at Lincoln Field, and then moving to the Wind Point Lighthouse and ultimately at the Leisure Center in Racine. In the later years the organizing and planning was done by Sherry, the youngest daughter of Cel.

Cecelia Mae Heck obituary

With her loving children by her side, Cecelia Mae Heck, age 90, of Racine, Wisconsin, passed away peacefully on May 7, 2026.



Born in Racine on May 29, 1935, Cecelia was the daughter of the late Nick and Teresa (Nee: Franchino) Catrine. A life-long resident of Racine, where she became known for her warm heart, strong work ethic, deep faith, and joyful spirit. She was a graduate of Wm. Horlick High School, "Class of 1953" where she also reigned as the first Prom Queen. On April 24, 1954, she married the love of her life, Richard J. Heck Sr., who preceded her in death on August 15, 2015. Together they shared 61 wonderful years of mar-

riage, building a family rooted in love, laughter, and tradition.



Cel and Richard Heck on April 24, 1954

Along with her husband she co-owned and operated Keystone TV & Appliance as well as was the proprietor of Cecelia's Catering. Cooking was not simply her profession—it was one of the greatest expressions of her love. She brought people together around the table with homemade meals, Italian specialties, and generous hospitality. Many knew her for her famous meatballs, sausage, beef dishes, and the care she poured into every event she touched. She proudly worked the Roma Lodge Italian Festival in the fried dough booth and St. Rita Catholic Church for many years, where she became especially known for making homemade sausages and meatballs that were loved by so many.



Cel and Dick Heck

She had a vibrant personality and a gift for making people feel welcome. Cecelia loved playing cards and bridge with the “Beavers”, traveling, entertaining, and spending time with friends and neighbors. Cecelia was a lifetime member of St. Rita Catholic Church, Vittoria Colonna, the Moose Lodge, the Knights of Columbus, the Wind Point Community Club, and the North Side Businessmen’s Association. Her kindness, humor, generosity, and resilience left a lasting impression on everyone who knew her.

Above all else, Cecelia treasured her family. She is lovingly survived by her children: **Richard J. Heck Jr. of Racine; Barbara (David) Schneider of Racine; James (Karen) Heck of Barrington, Illinois; and Sherry Heck of Racine;** grandchildren, Melissa, Ryan, Angela, Matthew (Jeanette), Teresa (Max), Robert, Nick (Bailey) and Molly (fiance Calvin); 8 great grandchildren: Gabriel, Kaylan, Isabella, Brooklyn, Davion, Ryan Jr., Madeline, Eowyn; 1 great-great granddaughter, Nova; sisters, Ann (Jim) Magestro, Teri (Lee) Nichols; other relatives and many dear friends. In addition to her parents and husband, she was preceded in death by her sisters, Mary

Jane (Tony) Clementi, Connie (Tom) Mussomeli and her brother Anthony Catrine.

A Mass of Christian Burial celebrating Cel’s life will be held at 11:30 AM on Friday, May 15, 2026, at St. Rita Catholic Church, 4339 Douglas Ave. A Vittoria Colonna service will take place at 11:00 am. Interment will follow at Holy Cross Cemetery. Relatives and friends are welcome to meet with the family for Visitation on Friday at 9:30 am until time of Mass at the church.

Cecelia will be remembered for her strength, generosity, devotion to family, and the way she made every gathering feel like home. Her legacy lives on in the traditions she created the meals she shared, and the love she gave so freely.



Cel and Dick Heck wedding at St. Rita’s Catholic Church in Racine.





Parents of Dick and Cel Heck from L-R: Clarence and Francis (Nee Pier) Heck, Dick and Cel Heck, Nick and Teresa (Nee: Franchino) Catrine.



Cel and Dick showing her engagement ring. Cel was 18 years old when this photo was taken.

“What The Heck” Facebook Group Web Page

How To Join “What the HECK”

If you would like to learn more about our family, join our Heck Family Facebook Group. Log onto Facebook and search GROUPS for “What the HECK.” You can then request to join the Group. All we ask is that you state how you are related to the Heck family. For example: My grandfather

was Alvin Heck or I married Jim Heck. Either Cheryl Heck or Bob Heck will approve you for access. There is no charge to be a member of the Heck Family Facebook Group. Included in the “What the Heck” site are many photographs, document images, video clips, and family news.

Here is the web address for our group page:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/Whattheheckfamilygroup/>

I encourage all of you to share the link to our “What The Heck” Facebook Group Web Page with all of your family members.

This newsletter is written and published by Robert J. Heck.

Our Family News Letter is published quarterly and is distributed without charge. My e-mail address is **HECK.BOB@gmail.com**

Please feel free to copy and share this newsletter with your family members. If you have old photos and a story behind them that you would like to see in this newsletter, please contact me.

Contributions to keep Our Family News Letter going are always welcomed and can be sent to: **Robert J Heck, 4910 Steeple Drive, Greendale, WI 53129.**

Many thanks to our many contributors who help keep this newsletter going. Here are the contributors since June 2025:

Ellen R. Stiner, Don & Sharon Heck, Rich & Jean Koenen, Jim & Karen Heck, Lee Ann Heck, Rebecca J Wright, and Alvin and Carolyn Heck. God bless all of you for your generosity and support.

This family newsletter has been published every three months since 1 June 1993. This issue is number 133. That means that I have not missed

an issue for the past 34 years. It is mailed to 60 family members and posted on-line for any and all of our family members.

All Issues of Our Family News Letter are On-Line.

Our Family News Letters are now available to you on-line and for free. There are 133 issues of the newsletter covering the period from June 1993 (Issue 1) to June 2026 (Issue 133).

All of the issues are available now at the following web address:

<http://ourfamilynewsletter.com/>

Each issue is filled with the history of our family. Each issue of the PDF file is searchable. You are free to copy and print any issue of the newsletter for you and your family to use. The newsletters are copyright protected so you may not use them for any financial gain.

I encourage all of you to share this link to our family history newsletter with all of your family members.

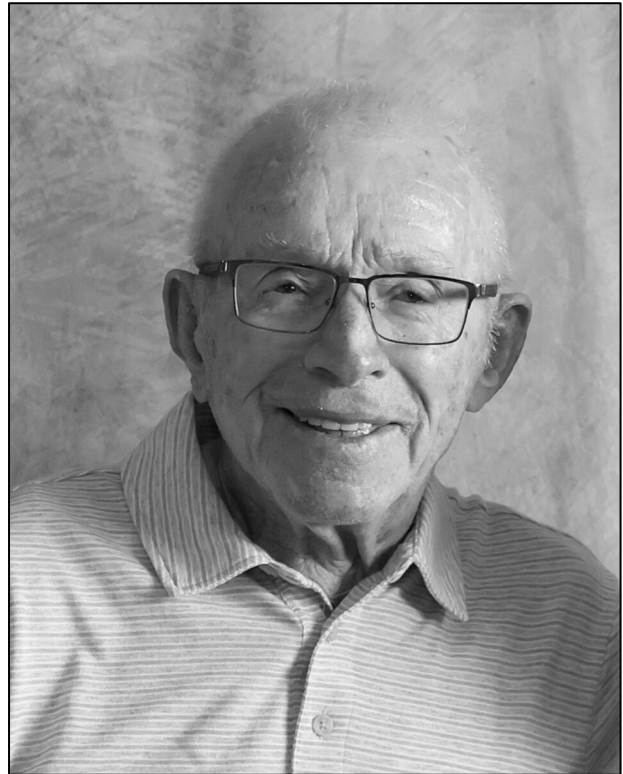
The following Obituary is for the father of Judi Heck, spouse of my son, David A Heck. While Dale was not directly related to the Heck family he was a real and important part of our family.

Dale D Wehrman

Dale D Wehrman went home to the Lord on April 30th, 2026, at the age of 90. Devoted husband of Joan (nee Walters). Loving father of Jeffrey (Stephanie), and Judith (David) Heck. Proud grandpa to Faith, Jadelyn, Averil, Logan, Lauren, and Grace. Son of the late William and Martha (nee Lemke). Brother of Alice (Gerald) Kobiske, and the late Yvonne, Don, Herb, Ray, Agnes,

Elaine, Allen, Wilfred, Victor, and Harvey. Further survived by many nieces, nephews, other relatives, and friends.

Being raised on a farm in Greenwood, Wisconsin, Dale learned the values of hard work, dedication, and the importance of family—qualities that would remain with him throughout his life. He went on to devote 41 years of loyal service to Waukesha Block Company, a testament to his strong work ethic and commitment.



In his free time, he found joy in life's simple pleasures. He enjoyed bowling in a couple's league, cheering on his favorite Wisconsin teams—the Brewers, Packers, Badgers, Marquette's Golden Eagles—and spending time watching NASCAR. A true Wisconsinite at heart, he never passed up the chance to enjoy a good Friday fish fry with his beloved Joan.

Above all, his greatest happiness came from being with his family. He especially cherished time with his grandchildren, whether it was playing

catch, tossing bags, or enjoying board and card games together. He took pride in being their chauffeur, always happy to be there wherever they needed to go.

He was also a devoted member of his church, Mt. Zion, where he faithfully served as an Elder. His quiet acts of service reflected his deep sense of faith and community. He will be remembered for his steady presence, his love of family, and the simple, meaningful ways he made life special for those around him.



Judi Heck with her father, Dale D Wehrman.



Dale and Joan Wehrman with their six grandchildren.

Benajah Burgess research using Full Text Search on the FamilySearch.org website.

I was teaching a class on May 14, 2026 on using a new Artificial Intelligence (AI) tool. This research tool will instantly search through over five billion unindexed records and documents including even hand written records in English or any foreign language. The remarkable thing is that it can complete the search in just a few seconds, and generate a report with full documentation.

I like to use my own family as examples in these searches. The members of the genealogy group that I direct are accustomed to hearing about my ancestors since I use my ancestors often in the hundreds of lectures that I have given over the past 33 years.

I started out by doing an “All Collections Search” for Benajah Burgess, White Creek, Washington County, New York.

Edit Your Search ×

Keywords

+"White Creek"

Name

"Benajah Burgess"

Place

Washington County, New York

Year (Range)

From

To

Image Group Number (DGS)

007561265, 007943373

APPLY RESET

The results of that search yielded the 1830 document shown, in part, on the next page.

of Hoosick and partly in the town of White Creek in the county of Rensselaer & Washington in the state of New York and bounded as follows Beginning at a stake and stones on the Walloomsack River on the north bank at the southeast corner of Freeborn Sweets land which is on the north side of the river running north 3° west 285 rods and 6 links to an oak tree with a stone standing at the bottom and stones lying around the tree thence east 38° north 35 rods 13 links to Corner of lands owned by Samuel Milliman at a stake thence south as the division line generally ranges about south 16° east until it strikes land owned by Arunah Sweet when the course commences south 19° 30 east, 20 chains and 36 links on said Arunahs line from his north west corner to a stake thence south 17° east 34 chains and fifty links to the south side of the road making the length of the whole of the east line from Millimans northwest corner to the south side of the road 318 rods thence south 21° 30 east 80 rods to the river a little below the end of the line from

The document was a transfer of the land owned by Benajah Burgess to three of his sons, issued one month before Benajah died in 1830. The land is described in detail but if you try to find the actual location of the land today, that would be a nearly impossible task.

Here is a partial description of that land: Beginning at a stake and stones on the Walloomsack River on the north bank at the southeast corner of Freeborn Sweets land which is on the north side of the river running 3 degrees west 285 rods and six links to an oak tree with a stone standing at the bottom and stones lying around the tree thence east 38 degrees north 35 rods 13 links to corner of lands owned by Samuel Williams at a stake thence...

(The description of the land goes on until it returns to the original starting point of a stake and stones.)

You can guess that the reference markers from 196 years ago are probably no longer in existence. But I went one step further.

I went into Google Gemini which is an AI function. I uploaded the document shown above and asked Gemini: "Can you read the land description and show where it is on a modern map?"

Gemini returned a 9 page report including a map and the starting point "**Stake and Stones**" is at **42.9332 Degrees N, 73.3495 degrees W.**

This description above is the starting point and it describes the only place on earth where it could be.

The **Full Text Search**, in it's nine page report, stated in part the following information:

"Benajah Burgess: resident of Hoosick, Rensselaer County, New York; father of John Burgess, Harvey Burgess, and Narron Burgess; grantor of family farm.

John Burgess, Harvey Burgess, and Narron Burgess: sons of Benajah Burgess; joint grantees of their father's homestead situated in Hoosick and White Creek, in Rensselaer and Washington Counties, New York. **(Editor's Note: This was one parcel of farmland that was huge and was situated in two counties.)**

Dates: June 16, 1830: Benajah Burgess - executed deed conveying family farm to his sons in Hoosick and White Creek, New York. July 17, 1830: Benajah Burgess - acknowledged execution of deed before commissioner in Rensselaer County, New York.

Summary: The document contains several recorded deeds from the early 19th century involving families from Rensselaer County, New York. Benajah Burgess of Hoosick transferred his home farm to his three sons, John, Harvey, and Narron Burgess, indicating a familial succession of property."

In another example of using Full Text Search on the FamilySearch.org website involved looking for any documents for the tiny village of Rudimov, Zlin, Czechia. The village had a population of less than 400 people. Rudimov is in the county of Zlin and in the country of Czechia also known as the Czech Republic in the state of Moravia. That was the birthplace of my maternal grandmother, Anna Pastyrikova.

1	Pastyřík Josef	mužský bytn	1	18/3/1860	Rudimov Uh. Brod Morava	Rudimov Uh. Brod Morava	čimoko Katol.	čimoko Katol.	čimoko Katol.
2	Pastyříková Anna	žena	1	28/9/1864	Rudimov Uh. Brod Morava	Rudimov Uh. Brod Morava	čimoko Katol.	čimoko Katol.	čimoko Katol.
3	Pastyříková Anna	dcera	1	11/5/1887	Rudimov Uh. Brod Morava	Rudimov Uh. Brod Morava	čimoko Katol.	čimoko Katol.	čimoko Katol.
4	Pastyříková Františka	dcera	1	27/4/1889	Rudimov Uh. Brod Morava	Rudimov Uh. Brod Morava	čimoko Katol.	čimoko Katol.	čimoko Katol.
5	Pláškova Anna	babička	1	1811	Rudimov Uh. Brod Morava	Rudimov Uh. Brod Morava	čimoko Katol.	čimoko Katol.	čimoko Katol.

This is an enlarged section of the 1890 census of Rudimov. The full page indicated that this was the Josef Pastyrik family living in House 71.

House 71 in Rudimov: No. 1 and 2 are my great-grandparents, No. 1 is Josef Pastyrik born at Rudimov on 18 March 1860. No. 2 is Anna Kapusta Pastyrikova born at Rudimov on 28 September 1864. No.3 is my Grandmother, Anna Pastyrikova, age 3, born on 11 May 1887. No. 4 is Frantiska Pastyrikova, a daughter, age 1, born on 27 April 1889. No. 5 is my Great-Great-GrandMother, Anna Plaskova, age 75. She was the maternal grandmother of Anna Kapusta Pastyrikova.

Note that in the Czech Republic, a female has the letters ova added to her surname. That is why Josef Pastyrik's wife is shown as Anna Pastyrikova.

Note that the region was known as Czechoslovakia from 1918 to 1992. It officially became the Czech Republic in 1993 following a peaceful split with Slovakia. The Czech government formally adopted Czechia as the country's official English short-name in 2016 to encourage a simpler, more natural global name.

Prior to 1918, the region that is now Czechia was known as Bohemia, Moravia, and parts of Silesia, which together made up the Lands of the Bohemian Crown.

Holy Roman Empire (922-1806)
Austrian Empire (1804-1867)

Austro-Hungary Empire (1867-1918)
Czechslovakia (1918-1992)
Czechia (2016-Present)

The area where my grandparents and my mother were born was known as Moravia. People from Moravia were usually called Bohemian in this country. Bohemia was the area around Prauge. My grandparents did not like being called Bohemian and referred to themselves as Moravia.

From the Photo Album...

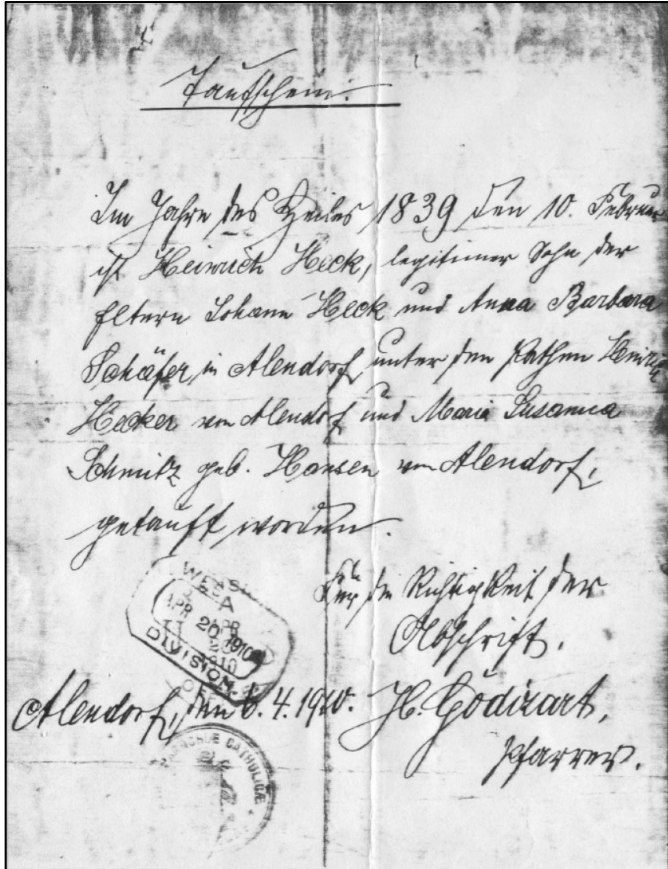


Standing L-R: Nathan and Katie, Nick, Amy, Steve, and Adam. Seated are Sharon and Don.

This photo was taken a year ago when my brother Don turned 80 on 9 May 2025. Don wrote the following: "What a special surprise on my 80th birthday. Our son, Steve from RI was here visiting us for my birthday and Mother's Day. Then our daughter Amy, her husband Adam and our grandson Nick from FL came

walking in. Then our other grandson Nathan, and his wife Katie from IA came walking in. What a surprise to have our whole family together for my birthday and Mother's Day. God bless them all."

Translation of the Baptismal Certificate: For Henry Heck using Google Gemini AI:



"In the year of Salvation 1839, on the 10th of February, Heinrich Heck, legitimate son of the parents Johann Heck and Anna Barbara Schäfer, was baptized in Alendorf under the godparents Heinrich Hacker of Alendorf and Maria Susanna Schmitz, née Hansen, of Alendorf.

For the accuracy of the copy.
Alendorf, the 6th of April 1910.
H. Godizart, Pastor."

"Type of Document: This is an official certified copy (Abschrift) of an original 1839 baptismal entry, requested and signed in 1910. This was

very common for people needing to prove their age or lineage for emigration, marriage, or official purposes.

The Child: Heinrich Heck (born/baptized Feb 10, 1839).

The Parents: Johann Heck & Anna Barbara Schäfer.

Location: Alendorf (likely the village in North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany).

Stamps: * The circular ink stamp at the bottom reads "PAROCHIE CATHOLICE...", confirming it is from the local Catholic parish.

There is an English-language archival or immigration stamp in the middle left that reads "W. E. & A. DIVISION / APR 20 1910", indicating this document was processed by a foreign authority (likely in the United States or UK) just a couple of weeks after it was issued in Germany."

(Editor's Note: This is a prime example of how AI Artificial Intelligence is now able to read handwritten documents in any language and translate it into English. The entire process using Google Gemini took three seconds to complete the task and write the report.)



This is a photo of the Catholic Church at Alendorf, Germany, built in 1490, where Henry Heck was baptized in 1839. The church is still used today for funerals and some weddings.