



Joan Knapp

July 10, 1940 - April 23, 2022

Joan Ann Knapp was born on July 10, 1940, and died at home, peacefully in her sleep, on April 23, 2022. She had, for many valiant years, battled chronic heart disease. She was a devout Catholic, and enjoys already the eternal fruits of her unwavering conviction. She leaves behind her loving husband of 55 years, Raymond, her children Lory Dolan and Scott Knapp, their spouses Ben Dolan and the former Sarah Newman, her six grandchildren (Jack, Courtney, Brendan, Michael, William and Holden), and a very large swath of family and long-time friends.

Joan, the youngest of five siblings, was born in Detroit to her parents, Emmanuel and Mary Tabone. She was raised, literally in the shadows of Tiger Stadium, in the Corktown neighborhood of Detroit. Many Maltese immigrant families, like her own, settled there. She was proud of her Maltese heritage, was a fluent speaker of the language, and a frequent visitor to the tiny Mediterranean island south of Sicily. She is predeceased by her four siblings, Caroline Smith, Evelyn Reale, Mary Brincat and Michael Tabone.

Joan attended grade school at St. Vincent's and St. Bonafice in Detroit, and graduated from Girl's Catholic Central High School. She did not attend college following graduation, but while in her 40's, she returned to school, at night while working her day job, and achieved an associate's degree from Macomb Community College.

She met her future husband, and love of her life, in 1963 while both worked for General Motors, and they were married in 1966. Joan and Ray started their family in Taylor, Michigan, welcoming Lory (in 1968) and Scott (in 1970). As part of the great migration out of the greater Detroit area to the northern suburbs, Joan and Ray moved the family to Sterling Heights in 1973, and remained. In the 80's, they also bought a home near Boyne Highlands / Nubs Knob, and continued thereafter to have a second home between the two great northern Michigan ski resorts. They loved being Up North, skiing in the winter, spending long summer stretches exploring the Petoskey and Harbor Springs communities, and enjoying the splendor of the Fall color changes. They were quick to offer guests to join them, or to use the home in their absence.

Joan was exceptionally welcoming, and loved to host. She was a fine cook and baker, and brought those skills to bear equally at holiday party extravaganzas, and average weekday nights. Dinner was promptly at 5:00 pm. Two parents, two children, and no exceptions. She was a fierce protector of her family (and their friends). She was quick to laugh, and often at herself -- her malapropisms and mixed metaphors were the stuff of legend. Joan was happy. She was also an accomplished conversationalist, but the speaking parts were not often equally divided among the participants

Joan loved to travel. She and Ray took several trips to Hawaii (including a trip they hosted for their 50th wedding anniversary, which included their children and grandchildren); and multiple trips / cruises to the Caribbean. They embarked on tours of Mexico, Australia and New Zealand, and many journeys across the pond, including vacations in Spain, Italy, Poland, Germany, Malta, and a riverboat cruise through Eastern Europe. At 79, Joan took her last international trip, to Malta, accompanied by Lory and Courtney.

Growing up in Corktown caused Joan to have a lifelong love affair with the

Detroit Tigers. She spoke of school days missed for Opening Day, and of regularly sneaking into the Stadium in the later innings. She instilled that passion in her children from their earliest days, and they remember well the 1976 craze surrounding Mark (the "Bird") Fidrych, and attending games in which he pitched (including, famously, the day he was "attacked" on the mound by bees). She saw two World Series champions, the latter of which she shared wholeheartedly with her family. The Knapp family was in attendance for dozens of games in 1984, including the games in which the Tigers clinched the division and the pennant, and also Game 4 of the World Series. Before the Tigers were on television regularly, she listened to nearly every game on the radio, with Ernie and Paul being token members of the family. Ray and Joan and their children were present for the last game at Tiger Stadium, and the first at Comerica Park. Indeed, the night before Joan's death, the Knapp family had plans to attend together the game in anticipation of Miguel Cabrera's 3000th hit. Alas, the rain . . .

Joan's passion for sports was not limited to the Tigers. She and Ray were season ticket holders for the Bad Boy Pistons (she loved Isiah Thomas and, improbably, Ricky Mahorn), and the Yzerman-era Red Wings. But second only to her beloved Tigers, and upon sending both of her children to the University of Michigan, Joan became a die-hard fan of the Wolverines. She occasionally attended basketball and hockey games, but was a constant presence on football Saturdays. She hosted tailgates in Ann Arbor across from the Law School, nearly every home game, until long after her children had graduated. She attended multiple Rose Bowls, and was able to secure 10 tickets to the 1998 game, watching with her children and their friends as Michigan won the National Championship.

Joan took great pride in the athletic and academic accomplishments of her children, both becoming attorneys, and her grandchildren. She dutifully

attended the high school football, basketball, and baseball/softball games of her children; and then the tennis, soccer, and baseball games of her grandchildren. She doted on her grandson Brendan, who was homecoming king, and holds the Birmingham Groves' record for most Victory Day halftime touchdowns. She joyously watched Jack and William matriculate to the University of Michigan, and Courtney to Boston College. She watched Holden and Michael excel academically in high school, and she eagerly anticipated their future college choices. Joan also took great pride in the fact that her children have longstanding marriages to incredible and successful spouses, and have married into families with like values, with whom Joan and Ray became fast and enduring friends.

Funeral services for Joan will be hosted by Mandziuk & Son Funeral Directors in Sterling Heights with a visitation at the funeral home on Tuesday, April 26 from 3:00 - 8:00pm; with a rosary service at 7:00pm. The funeral service will be held on Wednesday, April 27 at St. Jane Frances De Chantal (38750 Ryan Rd. in Sterling Heights). Joan will lie in state in the chapel from 9:30 to 10:00, with the service commencing immediately thereafter.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests donations to the American Heart Association.

Previous Events

Instate

APR 27. 9:30 AM - 10:00 AM (ET)

St. Jane Frances deChantal Catholic Church
38750 Ryan Rd
Sterling Heights, MI

Funeral Mass

APR 27. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

St. Jane Frances deChantal Catholic Church
38750 Ryan Rd
Sterling Heights, MI

Tribute Wall



“ *Joan Knapp*

October 23, 2023 at 04:00 AM



“ *Joan Knapp*

January 06, 2023 at 05:24 AM



“ *Joan was always so thoughtful. Years ago our daughter Lisa was living in Holly, MI. She just started her first teaching assignment at Chippewa Valley High School. Her round trip to work everyday was long and difficult. A number of times she was required to make the trip twice because of conferences etc. When Joan heard of her problems she immediately offered Lisa an opportunity to spend the night at their house so she wouldn't have to make the long trip home in the evening. This type of warm gesture exemplifies Joan's kind and generous nature!*

Clifton Kozian - April 27, 2022 at 01:56 PM



“ *Toxi purchased the Sentiments of Serenity Spray for the family of Joan Knapp.*



Toxi - April 26, 2022 at 01:41 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Joan Knapp.



April 26, 2022 at 11:44 AM



“ jJOAN, i ALWAYS THOUGHT YOU WOULD PASS US ALL. But God wanted you sooner. I loved coming to your house growing up and clamoring into Briggs stadium, Playing elevator and eating your Mom's Pastities and recently talking Law Schools for our granddaughters. Joan, what beautiful and memorable Memories. You're with Family now and awaiting the others. Rest in Heavenly Peace, dear Joanne. You will be missed. XoXO. Cousin Mary and Dave, Cinco Ranch, Texas.

Mary and Dave Whitney - April 26, 2022 at 06:02 AM



*Dear Joan,
I am so sad I have to say goodbye to a wonderful friend I have known for 43 years. As our faith teaches us a time will come for us to move on to a better place but,
Your spirit will live on in the memories of...
When I drive up north, I'll think of you.
When I meet with the card club, we'll think of you.
When I see a happy grandmother laughing and bragging about her grandchildren, I'll think of you .
When I see a soft star in the night, I'll think of you.
So rest in peace my dearest friend.
Love,
Sue & Nick Geisz*

Susan Geisz - April 26, 2022 at 01:52 PM



“ *Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Joan Knapp.*



April 25, 2022 at 04:31 PM



“ *Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Joan Knapp.*



April 25, 2022 at 03:27 PM



“ *Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Joan Knapp.*



April 25, 2022 at 03:26 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Joan Knapp.*



April 25, 2022 at 02:07 PM



“ *Heavenly Sentiments Spray was purchased for the family of Joan Knapp.*



April 25, 2022 at 01:45 PM



“ *Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Joan Knapp.*



April 25, 2022 at 01:41 PM



“ *Blessings to Joan and her loving family. So many wonderful memories but one of the most beautiful and exciting was the Hawaiian cruise with 58 family and friends that she and Diane put together. The "sheet" family will never be forgotten as well as our debut in "South Pacific" on board. Your visits to California were always amazing, full of fun and laughter. God bless you all. The Gates family.*

Laurie Gates--Ray's cousin - April 25, 2022 at 12:45 PM



“ *Strength & Solace Spray was purchased for the family of Joan Knapp.*



April 25, 2022 at 12:35 PM



“ *Beautiful Whisper was purchased for the family of Joan Knapp.*



April 25, 2022 at 11:47 AM



“ *Dawn of Remembrance Basket was purchased for the family of Joan Knapp.*



April 25, 2022 at 11:46 AM



“ *Medium Dish Garden was purchased for the family of Joan Knapp.*



April 25, 2022 at 11:19 AM

JT

“ Mike and I had just bought a new van so we took a trip North to visit Joanie and Ray. The next morning Ray and Mike went golfing in Ray’s vehicle, Joanie and I were going to lunch and to do some shopping in the new van that I had not driven yet.....I could not get the van started, We tried everything, then we started laughing, and laughing and laughing, we had tears running down our faces, 15 minutes later we decided it might be a good idea to check book and found out that I had to put my foot on the brake to start! Never laughed so much in my life!!

We always had a great time together, she was my sister from another Mother❤️

Jan 🙏🙏🙏🙏

Jan Tabone - April 25, 2022 at 08:51 AM



“ Lovely One Spathiphyllum Plant was purchased for the family of Joan Knapp.



April 25, 2022 at 08:37 AM



“ Sue Martinsky lit a candle in memory of Joan Knapp



Sue Martinsky - April 24, 2022 at 10:52 PM



“ *Sunday April 24th 2022*

TO THE FAMILY OF JOAN KNAPP-TABONE:

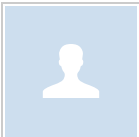
I am deeply saddened to learn of the death of my dear friend and classmate Joan Knapp from Girl's Catholic Central High School in Detroit. High school memories are those memories that one never forgets. We had so much fun confiding in each other talking about everyday life happenings during lunch time.

In 2009 Joan was extremely helpful in planning a successful 50 Year Class Reunion.

Kindly accept my sincerest sympathy in the loss of your dearest Joan. May she enjoy eternal rest in peace with God forever. She will be remembered by her GCC High School friends and will never be forgotten.

*Suzanne Martinsky-Brown
San Jose, California*

Sue Martinsky - April 24, 2022 at 10:44 PM



“ *Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Joan Knapp.*



April 24, 2022 at 09:28 PM

SH

“ Joan's passing is such a loss for the Knapp family. I so appreciated her consistent, loving, interest in our immediate family, but also the abundant love she poured out to everyone. My regret is that I didn't spend more time with her. May you rest in the arms of Jesus. Susan Knapp Hoekstra

Susan Hoekstra - April 24, 2022 at 09:20 PM

BT

“ Bev Thompson sent a virtual gift in memory of Joan Knapp



Bev Thompson - April 24, 2022 at 06:37 PM

BT

“ My husband and I will never forget this amazing friend. We have so many memories with her and Ray. From trips on a Mediterranean cruise to our wonderful Viking River cruise. Also time spent up north in Harbor Springs. We had summer homes up there less than a mile apart. We met years ago in our church ladies club and our friendship just kept growing. We loved her hospitality, cooking, baking, stories and her sense of humor. We had so much fun shopping, playing games and just talking. I'm so thankful for the window treatment she made me for my sunroom. She had many talents and many people loved her like family. We have to all remember we never lose those we give to God. Rest in His arms Joan until we meet again. 💖💖💖💖



Bev Thompson - April 24, 2022 at 06:37 PM



“ *Dreams From the Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of Joan Knapp.*



April 24, 2022 at 05:25 PM



“ *Rose Remembrance was purchased for the family of Joan Knapp.*



April 24, 2022 at 04:52 PM