



Joe Ann Koehn

April 13, 1930 - March 23, 2014
Gobles, MI

LIFE STORY / OBITUARY



VISITATION

Friday, March 28, 2014
5:00 PM to 8:00 PM EDT
Betzler Life Story Funeral Homes
Paw Paw Location
60900 Michigan 40
Paw Paw, MI 49079
[\(269\) 657-3870](tel:2696573870)

Food and refreshments will be shared.

[Driving Directions](#)

SERVICE

Saturday, March 29, 2014
2:00 PM EDT
Betzler Life Story Funeral Homes
Paw Paw Location
60900 Michigan 40
Paw Paw, MI 49079
[\(269\) 657-3870](tel:2696573870)
[Driving Directions](#)

CONTRIBUTIONS

At the family's request memorial contributions are to be made to those listed below. Please forward payment directly to the memorial of your choice.

Journey Family Church
P.O. Box 132
Gobles, MI 49055

A gentle, gracious, and kindhearted woman, Joe Ann Koehn was truly beautiful on the inside and out. Being a mother seemed to be a role that was tailor made just for her as she fully devoted her life to caring for the needs of her children. Joe Ann was a bit of a homebody who thrived on routine and making her home a haven for all who entered. She was passionate about cooking and was forever looking for new inspiration to use in the kitchen, which was something that her family truly appreciated. Although life will never be the same without Joe Ann here, all who were within her reach will be forever changed because of her love.

As the 1930s dawned in America we were poised for some of the most trying days we have ever faced as a nation as the entire decade was cloaked in the hardship of the Great Depression. Time were tough, but the American spirit could not be broken as evidenced by the completion of both the Chrysler Building and the Empire State Building as well as the first Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. It was during this eventful time that a young couple from Prairieville, Michigan, was pleased to announce the birth of their daughter, Joe Ann, on April 13, 1930. She was the older of two children born to her parents, Willard and Mabel (Hughes) Hall, and was raised in the family home alongside her brother, Bill, who was born when she was about one-and-a-half.

In many ways Joe Ann experienced a typical upbringing. Her father helped construct the local fish hatchery where he also worked. Since the hatchery had a home available to those who help oversee the daily operations this was the home where Joe Ann grew up. While growing up Joe Ann enjoyed roller skating and was a student at local schools, graduating from Paw Paw High School in 1949.

Life was forever changed for Joe Ann when she met a young man who was two years her junior named John Edward "Ed" Koehn while at the baseball field. A romance blossomed, and with a desire to establish a life together Joe Ann and Ed were married on November 4, 1950, at Covey Hill Baptist Church. The newlyweds took no time for a honeymoon and settled right in to married life. Although they divorced in the early seventies, they remained friends and were forever grateful to one another for the children they shared.

From the moment she became a mother Joe Ann fully embraced the role. She had been working as a secretary and issued driver's licenses at the local sheriff's office in Paw Paw, becoming the first woman in Van Buren County to work in the sheriff's department, but she stayed home to raise children when her daughter was born. Joe Ann raised their six children as well as her first grandchild later in life.

Joe Ann was not outwardly affectionate, but she did show her love for her family through the way she took superb care of them. Her passion in life was cooking and baking, and whether she followed a recipe or just made something up everything that Joe Ann made was fantastic. Since money was tight she was very creative in the food she prepared, and her skills didn't go unnoticed as even the local bowling alley wanted to buy her carrot cake to sell. During the holidays Joe Ann made it all, at least until her arthritis kept her from doing so. She loved listening to Sinatra and Bing Crosby while she cooked, and her family knew better than to get in her way in the kitchen! Joe Ann was selective in what she bought, making sure to read labels on everything. She was a superb housekeeper, too, as everything was always clean, and she carefully inspected the work her kids did as well. Joe Ann also insisted on having fresh curtains at the windows.

With a desire to complete the bathroom addition on her house, she took a job after a long break from the workforce. She was in her fifties when she began working at Pine Oaks Nursing Home (Ely Manor) in Allegan where she worked as a cook and utilized her acquired dietician skills. When her arthritis became too restrictive, Joe Ann retired.

For several years Joe Ann attended church at Covey Hill Baptist Church with her children. She always made sure that they were dressed to the nines, and they all got a new outfit for Easter. More recently Joe Ann had been attending Journey Family Church in Gobles.

A woman of many interests, there were so many things that Joe Ann loved. Christmas was her favorite time of year since she could satiate her love for shopping - although she would have no part of it until after Thanksgiving. She even loved shopping at Meijer and was known to spend up to four hours there at a time. Joe Ann enjoyed reading cookbooks and recipes, watching cooking shows along with Pawn Stars and Dr. Phil, and feeding the birds and deer. Going to garage sales was a favorite pastime as she loved finding cookbooks and treasures for the kitchen. About 15 years ago when at a garage sale with Lori she fell in love with the kitten Lori brought home despite not ever having been a pet person. She took to little Oreo, and Oreo became a great companion throughout her four year battle with cancer.

Although she experienced so many of the best things that life has to offer, there was nothing that Joe Ann Koehn treasured more than raising her children during hard times and securing a job she loved after having been out of the workforce for an extended period of time. She could be particular, even a little OCD at times, but she just valued being prepared. Joe Ann forever loved looking her best and made sure that everything was just so, even when engaged in a fierce battle with cancer. She was serious most of the time, but at times her sense of humor emerged such as the time she fooled everyone at work by dressing up as an old man! Joe Ann will be deeply missed but never forgotten.

Joe Ann Koehn died on March 23, 2014. Joe Ann's family includes her 7 children: Karen Koehn-Hill, Edwina Joy (George) Herpst, Barbara Bolthouse, Nancy (Jeff) Jacobs, Eddie Koehn (Vickie Cox), Janet (Jim) Lofts, and "grandchild" Lori Koehn; 15 grandchildren: Lori Koehn, Melinda (Rob) O'Rourke, Johannes Koldenhof (Mandy), Shawn (Amy) Bolthouse, Mike Koehn, Justin Sherwood, Kylien Jacobs, Tristen Jacobs, Amanda (Steve) Norr, Brandon Jacobs, Kristie Koehn, Justin and Jessica Overstreet, Ryan (Natasha) Koehn-Lofts, and Jennifer Lofts; 6 great-grandchildren: Conner, Kenadee, Grace, Kenny, Sofia and Amanda; brother, Bill Hall; and a niece and nephew. Joe Ann was preceded in death by her parents and by the father of her children, John Edward "Ed" Koehn. Learn more about Joe Ann and visit with her family and friends on Friday from 5:00 - 8:00 p.m. at the Life Story Funeral Home, Betzler & Thompson-Paw Paw, 60900 M-40; 657-3870 where services will be held Saturday at 2:00 p.m. Burial at Almena Cemetery. Please visit www.lifestorynet.com, where you can archive a favorite memory or photo. Memorial contributions may be made to Journey Family Church, Gobles.

