

Joyce Lundgren-Willette Jan 1, 1942 - May 12, 2017

Joyce's Story



Bangor - Joyce Muriel Lundgren-Willette, 75, passed away on May 12, 2017. She joins her cherished husband Wayne Albert Willette, his brother Chet and wife Dorothy, and other beloved family and friends who have gone before her, including her brother Joseph Atkinson, her parents, and mothers-in-law Leah Penley and Dorothy Thomas.

Joyce was born on January 1, 1942, in Worcester, MA, the daughter of Muriel (Hall) Lundgren and Kenneth Lundgren. She held many fond childhood memories of visiting her grandfather's farm in Petersham, MA, and spending summers with her maternal aunts, uncles and cousins. She and her cousins Brenda and Linda especially loved attending summer concerts at the bandstand in Petersham. Joyce attended Wachusset Regional

High School in Holden, MA, until her junior year and, upon moving to Maine, graduated from Bangor High School in 1959. Joyce graduated from the University of Maine at Orono in 1963 with a Baccalaureate degree in Psychology.

Always up for a game of Scrabble or Charades, Joyce was a lot of fun and had a terrific sense of humor. She made friends wherever she went, whether it was working summers in Cape Cod and the White Mountains, or traveling abroad. She started her career teaching high school to at-risk girls at the former Harlow Street School in Bangor. Later, she became a social worker for Bangor Schools, retiring in 2000 after 30 years of service.

Upon graduating from college, Joyce married her first husband, John Thomas, and lived in Bad Kreuznach, Germany, during his years in the service. In the years following, they lived in Cleveland, OH, and Scarborough and Bangor, ME, raising three children and spending happy summers with extended Thomas family members at their side-by-side summer camps at Beech Hill Pond. In her final weeks, John kept Joyce supplied with homemade vanilla custard and other treats, which she enjoyed every day.

Joyce loved the outdoors, was an avid reader, and was a very positive and supportive presence. She and her husband Wayne created an idyllic life in Orrington, restoring an antique cottage, gardening and spending time with their five adult children, 13 grandchildren and Bess, their Great Dane. As devoted grandparents, Wayne was a gifted woodworker and Joyce was a

talented seamstress, and together they created beautiful toys and furniture, as well as dresses, Halloween costumes, quilts, and other lasting gifts for their children and grandchildren. Joyce and Wayne spent summers at their camp at Sawtelle Brook, canoeing on Scraggly Lake and swimming at Sawtelle Falls. They also took several camping trips through the eastern U.S. In recent years, Joyce enjoyed visiting Boca Grande, FL, Campobello Island, Paris, France, and cheering on her grandchildren at their local sporting events and other activities.

Joyce will be deeply missed by her children and their spouses: Jennifer Thomas Barrows and her husband George of Avon, CT and Campobello Island; Tracy Willette and his wife Christine of Brewer; Matthew Thomas and his wife Pauline of Paris, France; Kyle Willette and his wife Kim of Bangor; and Megan Thomas Smith and her husband Mitchel of Hampden. Each of Joyce's grandchildren had a special place in her heart. She takes with her many treasured memories of Ashley, Kristina, Tyler, Drew, Jared, Jacob, Peyton, Ali, Kaelyn, Chandler, Charlie, Skyler, and Zadie.

She also leaves beloved extended family members: sister-in-law Debbie Atkinson of Dresden; father-in-law Philip Thomas, MD, of Bangor; sister-in-law Sue Thomas of Bangor; brother-in-law Owen Thomas and his wife Debbie of Otis; several nieces and nephews; and very special cousins.

Joyce was a loyal friend and had several decades-long friendships that were very important to her. High school friend Marylee Grant McIntosh and former colleague and friend Ann MacKay were both a daily presence for Joyce during her illness. Predeceasing Joyce were dear friends Maureen Goff who passed away in 1999, Paul Foster who passed away in 2009, Terry McIntosh who passed away in 2013 and John Cronin who passed away in 2014.

Joyce and her immediate family are especially grateful to Brenda Smith and Gwen Baines, whose daily support and care were invaluable during her illness. Joyce also appreciated the many thoughtful gestures extended by friends and family; the cards and notes of love and support she received, as well as the delicious meals prepared for the family -- all provided cheer at a difficult time. Joyce was very fond of her hospice nurse, Mary Rowe, RN, of Beacon Hospice, who provided exemplary and tender care to Joyce in her final weeks.

All are invited to attend a celebration of Joyce's life, to be held Thursday, May 25, 2017, at 5:30 p.m. at the Morgan Hill Event Center, 82 Morgan Hill Lane, Hermon, ME. Attendees are encouraged to bring stories, songs, poems, etc., to share. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to the Bangor Humane Society (BHS) by those wishing to remember Joyce in a special way. BHS has agreed to earmark contributions in her name for use in providing veterinary and medical services to homeless pets in their care.

Published on May 15, 2017