



Joan H. Robair

May 9, 1935 - September 28, 2018

Joan Robair

Joan was born in New Hampshire. One of her fondest childhood memories was spending time with her cousins' on their farm. This is when her lifelong love of animals began.

Joan was chronically ill as a child, and had multiple, severe illnesses and conditions that hindered her through her adult life. She did not have an easy life. However, the issues she suffered made her very compassionate to the suffering of others, especially small children and animals. She always fought on the side of the underdog. Joan fiercely detested bullies, and was quick to help out those who were less fortunate than she was.

Joan and her sister Anna spent their teen years working with their mother, Isabel. Isabel was a hair dresser and the girls earned money by shampooing customers and sweeping. Isabel also waited tables in a local diner, and the girls worked with her there as well. Joan grew up during the Depression, and the entire family worked to stay afloat. Her father, Alfred, repaired industrial machinery and worked for the Nashua Paper, the biggest employer in the town, for most of his life.

Joan went to business college after graduating Catholic high school. She earned her degree in bookkeeping, and also made friends with Jacki Dion, who would be her best friend for the next 60 years. It was a little after this time that Joan Landry met her future husband, Chief Master Sergeant Richard Robair. While "Aunt" Jacki and her husband, "Uncle" Bob, lived in Nashua for their entire lives, Joan and Dick lived in a variety of places courtesy of the US Air Force, including South Carolina, New Jersey, and the Philippines.

After the Philippines, Joan and Dick adopted their son, Kevin, and seven years later, adopted their daughter, Linda. The family's final transfer brought them to Vienna, Virginia, in 1972. An enlisted man's pay didn't go very far in NoVA, even back then. Joan used her bookkeeping skills to manage their money, pay their bills, create a household budget, as well as cook, clean, and raise two children.

After twenty-plus years in the Air Force, Dick retired and a year later started a new job with the Army Corp of Engineers, where he remained for another twenty years. During this time, Joan and Dick became grandparents, welcoming Ken and Diamond into their lives. After a few years after his second retirement, the senior Robairs sold their Vienna home and moved back to New Hampshire. They lived on a beautiful five acres happily for two years until Dick passed in 2006. Joan loved her New Hampshire home, despite the horrific winters, and remained there for seven more years.

During those years, Joan began the area's first Trap, Neuter, Release (TNR) Program for the large feral cat population in the area. The Robairs lived in a remote rural area, in which cats were dumped or simply allowed to roam free and breed. Joan would set traps for the cats, and then take the captured cats to a local vet who would spay and neuter them at Joan's expense, before returning them to the outdoors. Joan would take the kittens she would collect to the vet who would adopt them out to clients—after spaying and neutering them. At one point, Joan was managing a colony of 45 outdoor cats.

Health issues and the remoteness of her location led Joan back to Virginia in 2013 to live with her son and daughter in law, Kevin and Kathy. Joan brought her three adult cats to their household which already held two cats and three dogs. Joan's main concern was her cat's inability to deal with the move and living in a strange house with dogs, rather than her own discomfort of moving nearly six hundred miles away in the dead of winter. It was challenging for Joan to move into a home with two other people; one she hadn't lived with in twenty five years, and one she had never lived with. It wasn't always smooth sailing, but we were all determined to make it work, and we did. Joan took walks around the neighborhood when her health permitted and met her neighbors, many who became her friends. One neighbor was also a parishioner at St. Ambrose, and Joan and Janka became fast friends and enjoyed attending many Church functions and movie/coffee outings in her company. She attended sessions at the Little River Glen Senior Center and made new friends, enjoyed music and many other performances.

In 2017, Joan moved to the Virginian retirement and assisted living community. She made many new friends there, and enjoyed the many movies and performances that were offered. She also enjoyed going to the Attic, a thrift store operated in one of the rooms there.

Joan was an introvert, and while she did not have a large number of friends, the friends she had were wonderful and kind people, and were the most important thing in the world to her. Joan is survived by her sister Anna, daughter Linda, son Kevin, and grandchildren Ken and Diamond and her wonderful friends.

Please see memorial contributions at the bottom of this page.

Comments



“ 1 file added to the album Mom a Smilin'

Jefferson Funeral Chapel - January 28, 2019 at 09:44 AM



“ Joan's family: I'm so sorry for your loss. I went through a similar situation and I was very helped by the hope that I found in the Bible in John 5: 28, which says, "Do not amazed at this, for the hour is coming in which all those in the memorial tombs will hear his voice and come out". I am sending you a link with more information on this hope. <https://www.jw.org/en/publications/magazines/awake-no3-2018-nov-dec/>

October 05, 2018 at 12:00 AM



“ Mom and Grandma

October 04, 2018 at 12:00 AM



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Vivid Recollections - October 03, 2018 at 12:00 AM



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Sweet Tenderness - October 03, 2018 at 12:00 AM



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October 03, 2018 at 12:00 AM



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Arrive in Style - October 02, 2018 at 12:00 AM



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Beautiful in Blue - October 02, 2018 at 12:00 AM



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It was not always easy to get mom to smile, but it was worth the effort

October 02, 2018 at 12:00 AM



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America the Beautiful - October 01, 2018 at 12:00 AM



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Mrs Robair was the best mom a kid could have as far as I was concerned, she put up with all of us boys in high school and college running in and out of her house, lifting weights with Kevin, feeding us and making sure we were all doing well. . I will never forget her smile and love for her family and especially her kitty cats. Then it was her reign with the doggies at the house with Kevin and Kathy-and how they protected her every minute of the day she was home. She was the best. We will miss her, but I know she is in a better place and living large with her snacks and popcorn by her side, Mike

October 01, 2018 at 12:00 AM