



Joanne Kay Tusa

June 26, 2020

Joanne was born February 9, 1949 in Omaha, Nebraska to Joseph and Marie Zegar and died peacefully June 26, 2020 in Fort Collins. She moved her family to Fort Collins in 1979.

"Mine is the courage to Love" was the foundation of her philosophy that guided her life's journey. She focused her energy and love upon those she spent time with. Whether a stranger or her family, she focused her attention on others. As just one example, probably her first, in high school she volunteered at the Veterans Administration Hospital in Omaha and from there went on to be a nurses aid at Omaha's County Hospital. She was driven to volunteer, to do even the smallest thing for others but always with great love. She was always involved: a room mother, scout leader, PTA President and was recognized by the Nebraska Parent Teachers Association with the President's Volunteer of the Year Award, Pizza in the Park coordinator, helped plan and put on Alternative Drug Prevention and Prom Parties , cooked for school and Church dinners and festivals, went on Senior trips, led youth retreats and overnight ski trips, managed operations of a local swimming pool, participated in numerous fundraisers, and even once was given a Most Valuable Parent Award by one of her children's athletic team's head coach.

Her commitment of love and energy towards her family was unparalleled. She would sacrifice her own needs and wants for the benefit of her family. She

taught her children the value in connecting with others, loving people and caring for children. She did this by not only teaching and inspiring her own children but by working in and leading youth ministry programs in two Catholic Parishes. She touched hundreds of young lives, helping them find their spiritual compass. Along the way she taught all of them both the need for sacrifice and the rewards of service to others. It always made her so happy and tearful when a former "student", now an adult, would stop to tell her how she made a difference in his or her life.

Joanne and Rich (husband) attended the same Catholic grade school (two years apart) in Omaha, and dated throughout their high school years. She attended an all girls and he an all boys Catholic high school. They were married in 1967 and celebrated over 52 years of married life, but were really in love for over 57 years. She was a stay at home full time mother of 4 children, a grandmother of 14 with a loving heart like no other. She was able to celebrate her 50th wedding anniversary with Rich and the entire family in Winter Park, Colorado. Her 4 children and grandchildren are spread around the country. There are many to list, but she would have wanted each one listed. Eldest son Rich lives in Fort Collins with his two children Richie and Torrey. Son Tim lives in San Diego with wife Laura and their two children Reef and Raquel. Daughter Katie Buck lives in Honolulu with husband Jeff and their seven children Kylan, Kaden, Tristan, Jordan, Madison, Rilen, and Alana. And finally, son Scott lives in Honolulu with wife Michelle and their children Remi and Avery. Joanne's loving heart lives in each of them.

Joanne was a passionate photographer, water color artist, and avid gardener. She documented over 50 years of Tusa history with countless family photos and videos covering the simple moments on a family trip, to the major ceremonies including graduations, new additions to the family and of course weddings. She loved nature as well, shooting countless flowers and sunsets. No sunrises though, as she was a night owl. More than once while on trips to

the YMCA Camp in Estes Park and in The Grand Tetons at Colter Bay she followed a bear just to get that perfect picture. A visual artist at heart, she loved to paint nature. She would recreate many of her photos with water colors. When not painting or working with photography you could find her in the garden during spring and summer. She loved picking out flowers, planting and maintaining her gardens and flower pots. She would even construct gardens for her children when visiting their homes. She loved to bring beauty into the world.

The younger Joanne was athletic. When playing recreational softball for the Knights of Columbus in Omaha, the team awarded her a new bat and glove for the most homeruns during a season. When she was 8 months pregnant she earned her Red Cross Lifeguard Certificate. When skiing and trying to stay up with her two oldest sons she blew out her knee.

Joanne from beginning to the end, was excellent in the kitchen. She made fabulous dishes such as Czech dumplings, sauerkraut, and roast pork; a 75 year old recipe for Italian meatballs and spaghetti with a sweet sauce; Vienna apple strudel and had her own recipe for quiche.

Joanne loved to travel. From the YMCA in Estes Park, to tents and cabins in National Parks, to road trips from coast to coast, to tours around Europe with Katie and Scott and with Katie to China and South Korea; she loved it all.

She changed the world with each smile, hug, photo, painting, flower and "I Love You". Her love and support gave her children confidence to try, fail, and succeed. They will instill this in their children and that lesson will cascade down to each following generation.

Forever our LOVE to Joanne (wife, mother, grandmother, best friend and

friend)

The Tusa Family

A service celebrating her life will be a Mass at St. John XXIII Catholic Church on July 24, 2020 at 10:00 a.m. The Mass will also be live streamed at <https://www.youtube.com/user/RamCatholic>.

Memorials/donations in Joanne's name should be made to the Rocky Mountain Conservancy, P. O. Box 3100, Estes Park CO. 80517

Previous Events

Memorial Mass

JUL **24.** 10:00 AM (MT)

St. John XXIII
1220 University Avenue
Fort Collins, CO 80521
<http://www.john23.com/>

Tribute Wall



“ *Joanne Kay Tusa*

October 25, 2022 at 06:14 PM



“ *Kathryn, Jeanie, Bill, Liz and Mart and Families purchased the Pink Potpourri Bouquet for the family of Joanne Kay Tusa.*

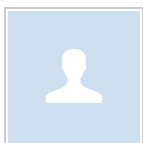


Kathryn, Jeanie, Bill, Liz and Mart and Families - July 23, 2020 at 02:44 PM



“ *Joanne brought so much fun into knowing her. I'll never forget the girls basketball tournaments and the friendship we all had as a result.*
My heart is with you Rich, Katie and family.
Vicki Bamford

Vicki Bamford - July 18, 2020 at 07:03 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Joanne Kay Tusa.*



July 15, 2020 at 09:43 PM



“ Loved every minute with you and Katie, Joanne. Too many fun times to count during our school years. Love to all. Joanne you were a wonderful mom. Love, Ingrid

Ingrid Kolstoe - July 14, 2020 at 10:44 AM



Joanne was an outstanding volunteer mom at Shepardson Elementary School!
Barb Wallner

Barb Wallner - July 22, 2020 at 12:14 PM



“ Joanne and I along with the entire family, spent so many wonderful years together during the "high school" years of our sons and a few years after. She was a beautiful soul with a loving heart and a smile and laugh that was contagious. She was always in my thoughts and prayers and now I know she is a wonderful addition to the guardian angels in heaven. My love and blessings to the entire Tusa family.

Donna K Palmer - July 09, 2020 at 12:38 PM



“ I met Joanne when the Tusa family bought their home in Collindale. I worked at Bartran Homes. We also worked together for many years (including Rich) managing the Collindale Pool. I enjoyed her very much and admired her commitment to family. I am sorry to learn of her death. (Kathy Anderson)

kathy anderson - July 06, 2020 at 03:16 PM

RH

“ *My condolences to Rich, Scott, Michelle and the entire Tulsa family. I remember Joanne as a trusted parent partner in the raising of our sons! May your many memories of her ease the days ahead.*
Rhys

rhys - July 05, 2020 at 06:56 PM