



JoAnne Marie Butler

February 4, 1942 - December 25, 2023

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Joann Marie Butler (Koy), on Christmas Day 2023.

Born February 4th, 1942 in Park Ridge, Illinois, she was the oldest child of three and the only daughter of John Koy, Sr. and Gloria Koy (Schact). She was a source of light and laughter to her beloved husband of nearly 50 years, Richard, the loving mother of two boys, Rodney (Nancy) Butler and Martin Butler, and the adoring grandmother of Maeve. She is survived by her brothers John Koy Jr and Gerald (Mollie) Koy, and her nephew John Koy III. She lives on in the hearts of all those fortunate enough to know her and will continue to brighten our days with the lifetime of beautiful memories she created for all of us. Visitation Thursday, December 28th from 2 PM until the 3 PM Funeral Service at Vermeulen-Sajewski Funeral Home, 46401 Ann Arbor Road West, (between Sheldon and Beck) Plymouth. To share a memory, please use the share a memory tab on this webpage.

Previous Events

Visitation

DEC 28. 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM (ET)

Vermeulen-Sajewski Funeral Home Plymouth
46401 Ann Arbor Road West
Plymouth, MI 48170
(734) 459-2250
plymouth@vermeulenfh.com

Funeral Service

DEC 28. 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM (ET)

Vermeulen-Sajewski Funeral Home Plymouth
46401 Ann Arbor Road West
Plymouth, MI 48170
(734) 459-2250
plymouth@vermeulenfh.com

Tribute Wall

MB

“ Eulogy for my mom, from the 12/28/2023 memorial service.

As a child, maybe 7 or 8 years old, I watched my mom take her role as the president of the Palatine PTA and become a champion for the immigrant children the school district wanted to leave behind. She fought a bigoted institution and made sure that the buses still ran to the apartment complex on Rand Road where many of my Mexican classmates lived. That was a profound moment in my life and helped shape me into the man I am today, with an unwavering belief in the dignity and equality of everyone regardless of race color creed nationality or sexuality. I watched my mom stand up against a crooked institution and tell them they were wrong, and I watched my mom win. As a child, my heroes were my mom and Jesus because of how they treated people. My mom was the reason I wanted to grow up to be a minister, and that's something that I only shared with my mom. The last time I was able to have a long phone conversation with her, before she started to fade, was two years ago. And I talked to her one last time about my youthful pastoral aspirations, among other things. She reminded me that it's never too late to pursue a dream.

Of course, the idealism she inspired in me almost backfired on her when I was in college and got fired from my summer job at the factory she worked at for trying to unionize the place and dressing down the big boss man in front of everyone on the factory floor. I got fired and she probably got into a lot of hot water but she never let me know anything except that she was proud of me for standing up for my coworkers.

Paraphrasing dad, it's that companionship between two people that makes life worth living. Spending 50 years with someone and still constantly learning new things about them.

There was a small framed painting on the wall in the living room that I'd never noticed before until Christmas night, when it was just dad and I in the house. It was of two foxes. Dad told me he hung it there

because mom loved foxes. It was something new I'd never known before.

This was the day I dreaded my entire life. And now that it passed I acknowledge how beautiful her life and her death was. She passed away on Christmas Day, in her sleep, as the Christmas songs she looked forward to every year filled the air. Her loyal little cavachon Cookie cuddled against her as she crossed over from this life to the next. She left us knowing she was loved deeply because we all had that final opportunity to tell her. We should all be so lucky to live and to die like my mother did.

I feel like my tears are all selfish tears and that if she saw me crying she would tell me it's all okay, it's just a part of life and nothing to cry about. She never showed fear. She bravely faced down cancer and chemotherapy two decades ago because she would tell you she had no other option. She wanted to see her granddaughter graduate from high school. She made that promise and she fought hard to keep it, coming up just a few months shy. If she ever questioned her own mortality she didn't question it in front of us. She would simply tell you that all of us will die one day, and only God knows when that day would be.

God chose to take my mom on one of the holiest days of the year. That speaks volumes about who she was in God's eyes. He gave us all one last day with her, filled with love and celebration, before he whispered to her that it was time to go home. It was time to be with your mother again. It was time for you to be a child again and be loved unconditionally like you loved your children unconditionally. It was time to leave behind the physical pain you carried for years without complaint and finally feel true peace.

I know all this, and yet I still cry my selfish tears. Because the single greatest source of love, acceptance, comfort and security I've ever known is gone, and my own world will forever be colder. There is one phrase I've stumbled upon over the past few days, and it rings loudly in my head every time I think of her and the life she created

for me and my brother and my dad. The luckiest. I am the luckiest for having you in my life as my mother, my best friend, my role-model. I am the luckiest. I love you so much mom, and I know I will see you again. Because I am the luckiest. Thank you.

Marty

Martin Butler - December 29, 2023 at 08:17 AM

AH

“ *I’m so sorry to hear of Joanne’s passing. I fondly remember spending time with her and loved her wicked sense of humor. I had one of the best Christmas dinners of my life at her house! She and Richard introduced me to plum pudding and hard sauce. So good! She was such a fun lady to be around.*

She fiercely loved her family and my heart goes out to Marty, Rodney, Maeve and Richard at this time.

Adrienne Herbst - December 28, 2023 at 01:39 PM

MB

Thank you Adrienne. She always loved you.

Martin Butler - December 29, 2023 at 08:24 AM



I read your eulogy, it’s a beautiful tribute to your Mother. This January 26th will be four years since I lost my Dad. It’s a horrible type of grief I’ve never experienced before. If you need to talk, vent or whatever you can find me on Facebook or Instagram.

Adrienne Johnston Herbst - December 29, 2023 at 04:49 PM

MB

Check your FB Messenger spam folder ❤️

Martin Butler - December 29, 2023 at 06:36 PM

EL

I grew up in palatine, The butler family was our back yard neighbor, when they lived on Morrison street, Until they moved in to the house off of palatine road. I always wondered where the family went to. I am sorry to hear about your loss. I know this is from 2023 and I am not sure this message will reach any of you. But if it does. I hope all is well with you.

Elizabeth - December 23, 2025 at 05:24 PM

KT

“ Kathy and Loretta - The Twins planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of JoAnne Marie Butler.

Kathy and Loretta - The Twins - December 27, 2023 at 09:27 PM



“ Fairest of All was purchased for the family of JoAnne Marie Butler.



December 27, 2023 at 09:27 PM

UP

“ Richards & family so sorry about your precious wife that you was golly committed to and was to you she loved her boys so much and special place in her heart for granddaughter Maeve. I met Joann at Marsh Plating were I worked her and I hit it off at first we had great friendship we would debate sometimes but we loved each other like a sister I will miss her so much but I got her memories i will cherish our memories till I see her on the other side.love una

una pitzer - December 27, 2023 at 09:13 PM

MB

Thank you Una for loving my mom like a sister.

Martin Butler - December 29, 2023 at 08:25 AM



“ *Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of JoAnne Marie Butler.*



December 27, 2023 at 08:18 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of JoAnne Marie Butler.*



December 27, 2023 at 07:53 PM

RP

“ *Robert P. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of JoAnne Marie Butler.*

Robert P. - December 27, 2023 at 03:45 PM



“ *Enduring Grace was purchased for the family of JoAnne Marie Butler.*



December 27, 2023 at 11:26 AM

UP

“ *Una Pitzer lit a candle in memory of JoAnne Marie Butler*



una pitzer - December 27, 2023 at 11:17 AM

VH

“ *Vern and Lisa Heavner planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of JoAnne Marie Butler.*

Vern and Lisa Heavner - December 27, 2023 at 08:29 AM



“ *Serene Retreat was purchased for the family of JoAnne Marie Butler.*



December 27, 2023 at 08:29 AM



“ *Pretty Please was purchased for the family of JoAnne Marie Butler.*



December 26, 2023 at 10:58 PM



“ *Medium Dish Garden was purchased for the family of JoAnne Marie Butler.* ”



December 26, 2023 at 08:40 PM