



Joan Augustine Connery

October 20, 2020

Joan Augustine (Bradley) Connery, 93, of Smithfield, formerly of Westerly and North Smithfield, passed away from COVID-19 on October 20, 2020 in HopeHealth Hular Hospice Center. In her final days, family members and friends visited with Joan in person, over the phone, and through Zoom. They surrounded her with love, prayers, words of gratitude, comfort and peace while she provided fleeting moments of humor. Joan was served by medical and pastoral professionals throughout her illness.

Joan was the loving and dedicated wife of Raymond John Connery for 66 years. They were each other's beloved and best friend. Their commitment to family and to each other was their common foundation; they are joined together forever. Raymond passed away on September 28, 2020.

Joan is survived by her five children, Andrew Connery (Kate); Susan Connery; Jane Allard; William Connery; and David Connery (Bonnie); seven grandchildren, Amelia Newburg (James); Miles Allard (Megan); Bryce Connery (Kayla); Erin Connery; Luke Allard (Tiffney); Frances Connery and Linnea Connery; and four great-grandchildren, Molly Allard, Wesley Allard, Henry Newburg and Quincy Allard. Countless nephews, nieces, cousins, in-laws, fosters, and dear friends will miss her presence in their lives.

Joan was born on August 3, 1927, the first child of William and Frances

(Dugan) Bradley of Blackstone, MA. She spoke often of her family's life on 81 Main St., and particularly of her beloved siblings, William "Bill" Bradley, Jr., and Frances (Bradley) Atwood, who preceded her in death. She kept up with the accomplishments of the Bradley and Atwood children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She was always delighted when they were able to gather together in celebration, where her love for them was returned in kind.

Joan attended Simmons College in Boston, commuting by train each day from her hometown of Blackstone. After earning her Bachelor of Science degree in 1948, she worked in her field of study as a dietician. She was the Chief Dietician of Woonsocket Hospital before leaving to start a family with Raymond, raising five children. She later continued her studies at Rhode Island College, where she earned her education degree. Afterward, she taught for 22 successful years in North Smithfield as the Title One Reading Specialist and Director of Literacy. She loved her work. In her later years, she was thrilled to encounter students who had overcome literacy blocks to become business owners, active community servants, and educators themselves.

Joan and Ray embarked on travel in mid-life, enrolling in Elderhostel so that on their trips they would learn the history and traditions of the countries they visited. Their knack for connecting with known and unknown expats around the country and the world expanded their travelogues and gave them wonderful stories to tell.

Social consciousness stood strong in Joan. Like her mother before her, she often wrote letters to the editor. Her family remembers her participation in protests to resolve Rhode Island State Police issues, strikes to improve union-based teacher contracts, and standing up during Mass to speak out in dissent.

Joan taught English as a second language to Vietnamese children, proudly

put all five of the Connery children through college, and clipped classified ads, mailing them to respective family members as a suggestion for improving their employment.

After retiring from teaching, Joan established the “Read to Me” program at Hasbro Children’s Hospital in Providence. Elder volunteers greeted children who came to Hasbro for well-child visits and read to them while they waited. Each child who left the doctor’s office had a new book to take home. Donations of hundreds of books were fully coordinated by Joan (and toted by Ray).

In Joan’s later years, retirement included the beach, hospitality at their home, golf and more journeys to Florida’s sunshine and to see the growing Connery families out West. She set a beautiful table and the balance on the plate reflected her earlier training and gifts in dietetics! Her hallmarks were her constant presence in her family’s lives, and her dedication to style and grace. She enjoyed a trip to “TJ’s,” opening a new book, writing cards and letters, sitting in the sun, and partaking in rich desserts, particularly chocolate.

Joan grandmothered with aplomb and skill. Her grandchildren will carry her with them in memories: long hot afternoons at Westerly Town Beach; her love of the color purple; her painted nails; how, when you drove away, she stood on the front steps waving until you couldn’t see her anymore. Her fridge, covered in photos, poems, prayers, and articles cut from the paper. The hundreds of letters, cards for every occasion, and books she sent by mail. The bedtime snuggles and stories. Her positivity. Her soft hands holding yours at the dining room table, catching up on all your news.

Joan was delighted by her great-grandchildren and admired how Miles, Amelia and Luke grew and developed as new parents. The love for books she

instilled in her family passed down to Molly, Wesley, Hank and Quincy, and their lives are richer for it.

Faith was truly the base and center of the Connery family. Raymond and Joan walked together in an unbreakable belief in God. Joan served with heart and intellect, insight and leadership. She prayed for her loved ones each night by name.

Her model, and her memory, is a blessing.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Sisters of the Congrégation de Notre-Dame, Blessed Sacrament Province: USA Office of Mission Advancement, 30 Highfield Road, Wilton, CT 06897-3802. https://www.cnd-m.org/en/usa/?page_id=629.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, her Mass of Christian Burial and interment at the Rhode Island Veteran's Memorial Cemetery in Exeter were private.

Tribute Wall

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“ I’m so sorry to hear of the loss of Mr. and Mrs. Connery. I have such fond memories of them as being kind and generous people when I visited my Aunt Ruth next door on Mechanic St. Since my aunt’s family were not Catholic I had to tagalong with the Connerys for church on Sunday morning. Even though their car was full of kids of their own, they always made room for one more. Rest in peace Mr. and Mrs. Connery.

Tim Hassett-Salley - October 30, 2020 at 07:09 PM

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“ So very sorry about Joan and Ray's passings. What a legacy of love and service they have left from their lives overflowing with family, humor, books, nature and kindness. It has been a heartbreaking month, but know that many around Rhode Island and the country are celebrating their lives and the gift they were to so many, and praying for your comfort and peace as you miss them dearly.

Nancy Wolanski - October 24, 2020 at 02:45 PM