



Jane Walton

April 20, 1940 - May 13, 2026

Jane A. Schaftenaar Menzer Walton, 86, passed peacefully on May 13, 2026, in Wisconsin, concluding a long and courageous journey with dementia. Born on April 20, 1940, in Holland, Michigan, she was the beloved daughter of Dr. Richard and Julia Schaftenaar.

A graduate of Holland High School who later attended Hope College. Jane lived in Sheboygan for 30 years, where she became actively involved in the community and devoted herself to countless service projects. During that time, she formed many lasting friendships that meant so much to her and came to cherish the strong sense of community she found there. Jane's life was defined by intellectual curiosity, compassion, grace, and an unwavering devotion to her family. She devoted many years to creating a home filled with warmth, laughter, and unconditional love while raising her five children.

Later in life, Jane moved to Phoenix, AZ to return to her studies and earned a degree from the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism at Arizona State University, reflecting both her perseverance and her lifelong commitment to learning. Literature was among Jane's greatest passions. Her mother often remarked that she seemed to have been born with a book in her hand. At the age of 50, Jane transformed her lifelong love of storytelling into a meaningful vocation when she began a journalism career at Phoenix Children's Hospital as a Media Relations Specialist. Over the next 25 years, she dedicated herself

to sharing stories that brought comfort, dignity, and hope to families facing life's most difficult moments. Her remarkable ability to uncover the humanity within every story, coupled with her deep compassion and gift for writing, affectionately earned her the nickname "Front Page Jane."

Jane possessed a rare gentleness that drew people naturally to her. Her faith anchored her life and quietly strengthened all who knew her. She carried herself with humility and elegance, extending kindness freely and listening with sincere compassion. Her laughter brightened heavy moments, and her radiant smile had a way of making others feel immediately at ease. Above all, Jane had an extraordinary gift for making people feel seen, valued, and deeply loved.

Her legacy of kindness, resilience, intellect, and unconditional love will continue to live on through her children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and all whose lives were enriched by her presence. To her grandchildren and great-grandchildren, she was lovingly known as "Mema."

She is lovingly survived by her siblings, Margie Knapp, Dick (Linda) Schaftenaar, and Becky (Rick) VanEenenam; her children, Jamie (Fred) Zimmerman, Tami (Mike) Petrocelli, Julie (Tom) DuVal, Jim Menzer, and Maggie (Joseph) Estrada; as well as her treasured grandchildren, Michael (Sara Jelenffy) Petrocelli, Juliana (John) Woetko, Emma (Brandon) Jones, Samantha (Damian Velez) Zimmerman, Rebecca (Andrew) Schmid, Max (Deanna Morreale) Zimmerman, Tommy (Jasmine) DuVal, Jimmy (Morgan) DuVal; and great-grandchildren, Jack and Henry Schmid, Jacob and Ava Woetko, Julian Jones, and many loving nieces and nephews.

Those wishing to honor Jane's memory in a special way are invited to make gifts in her name to Phoenix Children's Hospital Foundation (https://phoenixchildrensfoundation.org/ways-to-give/?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

Visitation will be held from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., followed by a service of remembrance at 12:00 p.m. on Saturday, May 23, 2026, at Langeland-Sterenberg Funeral Home in Holland Michigan

Cemetery Details

Pilgrim Home Cemetery

370 E. 16th St.
Holland, MI 49423

Previous Events

Visitation

MAY **23**. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

Langeland-Sterenbergh Funeral Home
315 E 16th St
Holland, MI 49423
(616) 392-2306
info@langelandsterenberg.com
<http://langelandsterenberg.com/>

Funeral Service

MAY **23**. 12:00 PM - 12:30 PM (ET)

Langeland-Sterenbergh Funeral Home
315 E 16th St
Holland, MI 49423
(616) 392-2306
info@langelandsterenberg.com
<http://langelandsterenberg.com/>

Tribute Wall



“ *Langeland-Sterenberg Yntema Funeral Homes created a Tribute Video in memory of Jane Walton*



Langeland-Sterenberg Yntema Funeral Homes - May 21 at 01:05 PM

MF

“ *Mike & Ann Walton Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Jane Walton.*

Mike & Ann Walton Family - May 21 at 10:18 PM

GW

“ *Grace & Robert Woetko purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of Jane Walton.*



Grace & Robert Woetko - May 21 at 03:45 PM

GW

“ *Grace & Robert Woetko planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Jane Walton.*

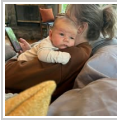
Grace & Robert Woetko - May 21 at 03:45 PM

SB

“ I spent my childhood living next door to the Menzer/Walton family, and their home was always filled with fun, laughter, and love. Jane was like a second mom to me. She and my mom were the very best of friends, and I know they are now reunited in heaven together. I will always treasure the memories of Jane — a woman filled with joy, kindness, and warmth, with a beautiful smile and a remarkable ability to see the good in everyone she met. She touched so many lives and will never be forgotten. Sending love and prayers to all of her children and grandchildren.

Susie Knauf Brennan

Susie Knauf Brennan - May 21 at 09:45 AM



Thank you Susie ❤️ she loved your family ❤️

Julie Menzer DuVal - May 28 at 08:31 PM

M(

“ Marissa and Chrissy (Riccio) purchased the Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet for the family of Jane Walton.



Marissa and Chrissy (Riccio) - May 20 at 09:40 PM

KO

“ Working with Jane for 9 of the 25 years she spent at Phoenix Children's, she was far more than a colleague. I learned many life lessons from her. When we went to a conference in Chicago, we took a day to drive to Holland, MI where I was fortunate enough to meet her mom and hear some great childhood memories. As a professional, her dedication to her job was legendary. For many years, she was the only member of the team serving as our on-call contact for media. Those who have worked in hospital communications--and her family--will understand the weight of this responsibility as it means handling late night and weekend calls related to the worst tragedies a family can face. Her protection and advocacy for the children and their families made her an important lifeline for them, while the strong relationships she built with reporters in telling the many good and inspiring stories of the hospital allowed her to do the job so successfully for so long. But, it was her graciousness and generosity I will remember most. She was in her element when hosting parties (and a great chef), and her love for her family shone from her so strongly, it reached those around her-- I was so blessed to feel its warmth. My thoughts and prayers are with her beloved family and friends. - Kimberly Ovitt

Kimberly Ovitt - May 20 at 12:20 PM

ME

Thank you Kimberly. She loved working for Phoenix Children's and had such pride in her work. It was an inspiration to me and my family. She really enjoyed working with you. Thank you for your prayers and thoughts during this time. -Maggie Estrada

Margaret Walton Estrada - May 22 at 10:36 AM

LV

“ *Laura and David Velez purchased the Emerald Garden Basket for the family of Jane Walton.*



Laura and David Velez - May 20 at 09:02 AM

TM

“ *The Smaciarz's, Cronk's & Martin's purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of Jane Walton.*



The Smaciarz's, Cronk's & Martin's - May 18 at 12:12 PM

RF

“ *Rainbow and Luo Family purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Jane Walton.*



Rainbow and Luo Family - May 18 at 11:12 AM

RF

“ *Rainbow and Luo Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Jane Walton.*

Rainbow and Luo Family - May 18 at 11:12 AM



“ *Dreams From the Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of Jane Walton.*



May 18 at 10:35 AM



“ *Bountiful Rose Basket was purchased for the family of Jane Walton.*



May 18 at 09:34 AM



“ *The Salzman Family purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Jane Walton.*



The Salzman Family - May 16 at 08:16 PM



“ *The Salzman Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Jane Walton.*

The Salzman Family - May 16 at 08:16 PM

SF

“ *Jane Walton was, and still is, deeply love and respected. She lives on in the hearts and minds of Maggie and among her family and friends. The Salzman family wishes her eternal rest in Heaven.*

Sonia and David Salzman and Family - May 16 at 08:08 PM

JE

To the Salzman family,

What began as a professional relationship more than 15 years ago grew into a friendship that Maggie and I will always cherish. Thank you for your incredible generosity, guidance, mentorship, and, most importantly, your friendship over the years.

Our mom was truly one of a kind, and it means so much to know she was surrounded by such thoughtful and caring people. During this difficult time, your kindness, prayers, and support have brought us great comfort, and we are deeply grateful that you are thinking of our family.

With heartfelt thanks and love, Maggie and Joseph Estrada

Joseph and Maggie Estrada - May 18 at 03:53 AM

PP

“ *Patricia P. purchased the Emerald Garden Basket for the family of Jane Walton.*



Patricia P. - May 16 at 11:33 AM