



JoAnne Brooks

March 10, 1924 - September 21, 2019

JoAnne Vander Velde Brooks, loving mom, devoted Christian, community activist and Peacemaker, entered heaven on the International Day of Peace, Saturday, September 21, at age 95. Born in Detroit, Michigan on March 10, 1924 to Dr. Otto and Margaret (Den Herder) Vander Velde, she moved with her family to Holland two years later, where her father set up his medical practice. JoAnne graduated from Holland High School and attended Northwestern University's School of Speech, which provided a foundation for a life of singing, acting and public speaking. She left college one semester short of graduation to marry her lifelong friend, Jim Brooks, who was then serving as a B-29 navigator during WWII. When the war ended, they returned home to Holland, MI where Jim entered the family soft drink bottling business and JoAnne began her lifelong service to the community. As a lifetime member of Hope Reformed Church, JoAnne taught Sunday School, led a Prayer Group, participated in Women's Circles and served on the Consistory. Her strong faith in Jesus led her to deep compassion for others. She and her church friends were active in early migrant support programs. They also started the Holland Day Care Center for children of single parents. She attended a sacred dance performance in Colorado and brought the idea back to Holland. JoAnne and her friends recruited Maxine De Bruyn, then head of the Hope College Dance Department, to choreograph and teach them to perform for local worship services. JoAnne was passionate about social justice and related political issues. In addition to serving as President of

Holland Junior Welfare League, she was a founding member of the Holland Area League of Women Voters and Holland Peacemakers. When Jim retired from Squirt & Company, he and JoAnne first retired in Cancun, Mexico where they fell in love with the local culture. In 1987 they moved to the Ocean Reef Club in Key Largo, FL, while continuing to enjoy summers at their home on Lake Michigan. JoAnne and Jim found great joy in boating wherever they lived. JoAnne started the Ocean Reef Children's Sunday School, which she taught well into her 80s. She also served as the yacht club's Chaplain of the Fleet. In 2008, Jim and JoAnne moved to Freedom Village in Holland, where JoAnne walked a mile each day, and was active in a prayer circle, Bible study, singing and bridge groups. On Friday nights during the season, she could be found at the Macatawa Bay Yacht Club sipping Kendall Jackson Chardonnay at a table reserved for dear friends in their nineties. Jo Anne is predeceased by her husband of 68 years, James F. Brooks, her son, Rev. Steven R. Brooks and his first wife, Kathie C. Brooks, in-laws, Don and Janet Brooks Winter and her longtime mentee, Jewel. JoAnne's loving spirit lives on in her daughter, Susan (Rick) Wallace, of Foley, AL, her son, James W.F. (Donna) Brooks, of Holland, MI, Steve's wife, Linda Brooks of Colorado Springs, CO, and her brother Jack (Marilyn) Vander Velde of Ann Arbor, MI. She is also survived by seven grandchildren, Tiffany (Pablo) Bernal, Scott J. (Amanda) Brooks, Ross (Lindsey) Brooks, Brad (Laura) Wallace, Matt Wallace, Bree (Riley) Mikelson, and Rev. Ben (Katie) Brooks, 14 great grandchildren and an extended family of nieces, nephews and exchange students from The Netherlands, Russia and Chile. The family expresses their deepest appreciation to the caregivers and staff of Freedom Village and Hospice of Holland who made this final journey so comfortable and meaningful. JoAnne's cremains will be interred in the Hope Church Memorial Garden during a private family gathering. A visitation with her family will be held at Freedom Village, 145 Columbia Ave, Holland, MI 49423 on Wednesday, September 25 from 3:00-5:00pm. A Celebration of JoAnne's Life will be held at 11:00 am on Saturday, October 12, 2019 at Hope Reformed Church, 77 West 11th St. Holland, MI. A time of

visitation with the family will available that morning beginning at 10:00 am. In lieu of flowers, charitable donations are encouraged to Hope Reformed Church, 77 West 11th ST, Holland, MI 49423 or the Foundation for Vision Research, 5030 Cascade Rd, SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49546 with a designation to Macular Diseases Research.

Tribute Wall



“ *Langeland-Sterenberg Yntema Funeral Homes created a Tribute Video in memory of JoAnne Brooks*



Langeland-Sterenberg Yntema Funeral Homes - September 21, 2019 at 12:00 AM



“ *JoAnne Brooks*

August 31, 2022 at 01:26 PM



“ *"Our hearts go out to the Brooks family as they remember and celebrate JoAnne's life. Although I did not have a chance to meet JoAnne, I experience her legacy through the exceptional leadership Jim and Donna provide for our university and our community. She lives on through her family. With our prayers, Philly Mantella and Bob Avery."*

Philly Mantella - September 23, 2019 at 12:00 AM



“ *"Condolences To the Family"*

Susan Pendergrass - September 23, 2019 at 12:00 AM

AF

“*Sorry that JoAnn has joined the ancestors, she made our lives in Holland, Michigan so very delightful. We are all sadden to have her leave us. Germaine Pellebon-Smith and the Smith clan Lehia Acox, Fronse Jr, Gamal and Julius*”

A friend - September 22, 2019 at 12:00 AM

RL

“*Wishing the Brooks Family my deep condolences. Although I never met JoAnne personally, I have heard wonderful things about the good work she did in the community. The Holland Museum was a recipient of her generosity for many years. For that we are tremendously grateful.*”

Ricki Levine - September 22, 2019 at 12:00 AM

MZ

“*Dear Susan and Jim, and families, your mother was such a wonderful and gentle friend to my mom. She always had a kind word for everyone and shared her love with all those she touched. Be comforted by the knowledge that she has joined your dad in the arms of the Lord.*”

Margo Zeedyk - September 22, 2019 at 12:00 AM

WE

“*So sorry to read about the passing of your Mother.*”

William Elenbaas - September 22, 2019 at 12:00 AM