



Joyce A. Zerban

September 19, 1942 - April 7, 2023

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Joyce passed away at home, after a brief illness.

She had a long and rewarding career as a first-grade teacher and reading specialist. She always said that she never went to work - she went to school. She was delighted to have second generation students. She was tickled to interact with her former students as adults, and she could often recognize them by their smiles. Her students were her kids, and they all meant the world to her.

She married the love of her life, Don Zerban, in 1980 on the first day of spring. They packed in a lot of happiness and amazing adventures together before Don passed away in 2000.

She led by example. She never wanted to be left out, and she was usually up for a glass of wine. She was involved in so many things in her retirement that her family could barely keep track of her. She was greatly invested in the community that she held so dear, serving on the school board, women's club, garden club, and the library board. She supported the arts and other important causes. She greatly valued adventures in travel, locally and internationally. She loved time with the Divas. She was an avid reader and would easily get

lost in a good book at any given time. She was part of several book clubs, though sometimes it was more about getting together than reading the book. She loved playing Rummikub with her friends and her grandkids. There was an important morning text group every day. She appreciated all of you.

She fiercely loved her family, and we loved her back. We were so lucky to have her, and we know it.

She is survived by her children: daughter Jennifer McGill (husband Brian), son J.R. Stever (wife Alison North), and bonus daughter Laurie Papes; her siblings: Jerry Genteman (wife Bobbie), John Genteman (wife Nancy), and Jody Genteman; her grandchildren Tristan, Candice, Corinne, Amanda, Finnegan, Leyna and Darby, as well as loving nieces and a nephew.

She is survived by her many partners in fun, adventure, and community. And, lastly, she is survived by countless kids who learned to love school and love reading all because of her.

In lieu of flowers, the family would appreciate memorials to the benefit of the Jennie Latzer Kaser Childrens' Library at the Louis Latzer Memorial Public Library, or a literacy program of your choice.

Arrangements are being handled by Spengel-Boulanger Funeral Home in Highland, IL.

Visitation will be held from 4:00 PM to 8:00 PM on Friday, April 14, 2023, and from 8:00 AM to 8:30 AM on Saturday, April 15, 2023, at Spengel-Boulanger Funeral Home in Highland, IL.

Funeral Mass will be at 9:00 AM on Saturday, April 15, 2023, at Saint Paul Catholic Church in Highland, IL, with Rev. Fr. Pat G. Jakel, Pastor, officiating.

Interment will be at Saint Joseph Catholic Cemetery in Highland, IL.

Tribute Wall



“ *Spengel-Boulanger Funeral Home & Dauderman Mortuary created a Tribute Video in memory of Joyce A. Zerban*



Spengel-Boulanger Funeral Home - April 13, 2023 at 10:55 AM

AW

“ *Mrs. Zerban was my 1st grade teacher during the 1983-84 school year. She was always kind and nurturing, while still making learning fun for her class. I still remember her periodically setting up a store in her classroom. She would set this store up so that her students could go "shopping" for good behavior, listening, good deeds, and good grades. She always had a variety of fun things to choose from - I always chose wall posters! I'll always remember her smile, kindness, and for being such a wonderful teacher.*

Amy Watts - April 25, 2023 at 02:26 PM



“ 58 files added to the album Life Tributes



Spengel-Boulangier Funeral Home - April 13, 2023 at 10:35 AM

EB

“ I was lucky enough to be one of her first grade students and later work along side her as an educator. Truly a teacher who loved kids and "going to school". A perfect example of what an educator should look like.

Erick R Baer - April 12, 2023 at 03:40 PM



“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Joyce A. Zerban.



April 12, 2023 at 11:51 AM

CI

“ Our daughter was one of Mrs. Zerban's Reading recovery @ the Primary in 2nd grade. I remember being so confused as to 'why' my daughter needed that class ..Mrs. Zerban & Mrs. Plocher calmed my fears and I can proudly say my daughter loves to read still to this day. They were the most caring teachers in her life. And Mrs. Zerban always knew me by name when she saw me. She will be greatly missed.

Cindy - April 11, 2023 at 10:31 PM



“ Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Joyce A. Zerban.



April 11, 2023 at 11:07 AM

NH

“ I taught first grade across the hall from Joyce from 1979, until she became a reading recovery teacher. Joyce was a mentor and friend to me, and encouraged me in my career as a young teacher! I was also fortunate to spend some time with her in Highland Woman's Club recently. Her passing is way too soon for us, but no doubt she is reunited with her beloved Don!!

Nancy Horrell - April 11, 2023 at 10:54 AM

JC

“ Joyce and I were good friends in high school. She was a sweet and special lady!! I will miss her smile and kindness!

Jan Camp - April 10, 2023 at 09:43 PM



“ *Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Joyce A. Zerban.*



April 10, 2023 at 09:26 PM



“ *Grace Sugg lit a candle in memory of Joyce Zerban*



Grace Sugg - April 10, 2023 at 08:12 PM



“ *Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Joyce A. Zerban.*



April 10, 2023 at 07:28 PM



“ *Joyce was an inspiration to all who knew her. She always had an infectious smile and laugh. I enjoyed the many times we spent together on committees. Joyce was an angel On earth and now in heaven. 🙏🏻💕*

Pam Lecerf - April 10, 2023 at 07:16 PM

LD

“ Our two oldest were fortunate enough to have Joyce as their first grade teacher. She was amazing, especially in working with kids who didn't fit in the mainstream. She understood them and supported them and made them feel good about themselves. I remember her saying once, about the class that Kristina was in, that each child in that class had his or her little eccentricities, and that that was what made them so special and lovable to her. Our daughter, who was in Joyce's class in 1978, recently ran into Joyce around town, and Joyce still remembered her name, 45 years later! Amazing! She was a force of nature in the lives of her students and for everyone who got to know her.

Linda Driesner - April 10, 2023 at 06:19 PM

MM

“ Jennifer, JR and Families,
A brilliant, beautiful light has gone from our sight. But we are “Oh So Blessed” to have seen her shine and learned from her wealth of knowledge and felt the warmth of her caring and Love.
A dear friend and colleague-she will be missed beyond words.
A teacher touches the future. One will never know where her influence will end.
May God Bless Each of You .
Your Memories and Love are Forever.
Marsha Moore—taught with Joyce for many years.

Marsha Moore - April 10, 2023 at 05:41 PM

JK

“ Joyce was a very kind and beautiful lady! I can remember her bringing crayons and coloring books to my first grade son (he was in the hospital @ the time.) He is in his 40's and still says she was his favorite teacher. May God wrap his arms around this lovely lady!!

Judy Kuhn - April 10, 2023 at 04:53 PM

JS

“ *Jan Schneider lit a candle in memory of Joyce
Zerban*



Jan Schneider - April 10, 2023 at 04:47 PM