



# Jacqueline Marie Ritter

JUL 13, 1940 - JUN 10, 2025



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# Jacqueline Marie Ritter

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**J**acqueline Marie Ritter (nee Kopec), 84, of North Royalton, Ohio passed away peacefully on June 10, 2025. She was born in Lynch, Kentucky to the late Paul and Emily Kopec.

Jackie was the devoted wife of Donald Ritter and proud mother of Scott Ritter and Jill Rogers (John). She cherished her grandchildren, Morgan Carter (Matt), Nolan, Mazi and Max Ritter and her two great grandchildren, Cameron and Rory Carter. Jackie enjoyed being the oldest of six siblings, Georgia Smalley (Denny), Nancy Stefansson (David), Debbie Cherpillod (Leo), Paul and Jeff Kopec and her sister-in-law Nancy Zolidis (Mike). She was also lucky to be surrounded by many great nieces and nephews.

Jackie loved tennis, golf (she had two hole in ones), gardening and painting. She will be sorely missed by all her family and numerous friends. Her life will be celebrated at a later time with hugs, a few laughs and a stiff martini in her honor. Definitely a life well lived!



## Tribute Wall

**Jacqueline Marie Ritter**

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**Diane Baer** posted:

Jackie was one of my best friends for over 40 years. I have so many memories of us writing to each other after I moved away from Cleveland then the writing turned into phone calls. Sometimes, she was like a mother to me with her advice. I keep thinking of everyday things I want to tell her but can't. I wish I had had a chance to say good-bye. I will miss you dear friend but remember all the memories we shared.Love,Diane

July 12 at 10:59 PM



**Anonymous** sent a Country Basket Blooms to the Ritter family.



June 26 at 12:55 AM



**Deb Cherpillod** posted:

Jackie & Don were neighbors with our family (The Lacinski's My Mom & Dad, and 5 of us kids, ) for several years.We had a friendship exclusive to only what neighbors can have. They were always there for us.Jackie & my Mom were in a Wednesday morning bowling league for years.Jackie taught one of my older sisters', Gayle, 14 y.o., and me (11 y.o.) how to be majorettes!She was a majorette in high school herself (very cool), and taught us everything she knew about baton-twirling with routines. You could tell that she was very happy doing this.She would put a record-player in her window facing our driveway playing traditional marching music.We and a few other neighborhood girls would line up in our driveway facing her house marching, etc. It was lots of fun and we spent all summer learning this.Gayle was the 1st of us to try-out at junior high school and made it onto the team. She went on being a majorette all through junior and high school, being head majorette her senior year!I was a majorette in 9th, 10th, and 11th grade. (but not a head majorette).Gayle and I wanted to be sure to tell this story being very thankful for Jackie making this possible opening up a whole new world for us!Debbie (her sister, & just one year older than me) would have never had the great, fantastic, very close friendship that we have had for the past (we think, [lost count] 50 years!! that we would have not had but for Jackie introducing us.We will never forget her!Debbie said I HAD to tell this story:When I was a teenager, I babysat for Scott & Jill. They LOCKED me OUT of the bedroom they were in!Fortunately, I knew how to open it with a coat hanger!Jackie & Don were cool with it, but they got into a lot of trouble.With love, concern and heartfelt sympathy,Karen Lacinski Markiewitz & John with Karen Moschini,Gayle Lacinski & Dave with Gayle Roberts

June 13 at 7:10 PM



## Tribute Wall

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NZ

**Nancy Zolidis** shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.

Jackie and me in 2017. She always looked fabulous!



June 17 at 9:42 AM

NZ

**Nancy Zolidis** posted:

Jackie came into my life when I was 10 years old. My brother, Don (8 years my senior), brought her home to introduce her to mom, dad and me. Little did I know of the significance of this event. Don and Jackie married when I was 12, and had twins, Scott and Jill, a year later when I was 13. Tragedy struck our family four months afterwards when my father died. As my parents had moved from Williamsport, PA to Cleveland for better opportunities, there were no relatives to surround us. In the following teenage years, it was Don and Jackie along with the twins that filled a huge void in my life as well as my mom's. Jackie was the older sister that I never had. During my formative teen years, she was a mentor, friend, and protector. One summer day when I was 14, I planned to meet a boy at Halloran Park. Jackie was at my house, my mom was out. I told Jackie that I was going to a girlfriend's house down the street - I lied. When I returned, Jackie reprimanded me for lying and for putting myself at risk as a young girl was kidnapped at the park not long before this. How she found out about my meeting, I still don't know. It was Jackie who got me my first job in the summer of my 16th year as an assistant file clerk at a law firm downtown (who can say that their first job was in a law firm?). When I was 18 years old, I brought my future husband to meet Jackie and Don. Jackie, sitting at the table when we walked into the kitchen, didn't give him a warm, friendly greeting. No, she gave him the once over as if to say, I'm watching you and you better be on good behavior. Fortunately, he lived up to her expectations. My married life took us away from Cleveland, but we visited as often as possible and at least yearly during the last several years. Jackie, always the gracious hostess, made us welcome and honored me by naming the spacious upstairs bedroom, decorated with family photos and Jackie's special touches, 'Nancy's Room'. In all the years of telephone conversations and visits, we never had a harsh word between us. On the very rare occasion when we disagreed, Jackie always wanted to understand why my opinion was different than hers. She respected my reasons as I did hers. Jackie was generous, genuine, and kind. I'm so grateful to my brother for bringing her home over 67 years ago and comforted by the many wonderful, lifetime memories.

June 13 at 7:10 PM



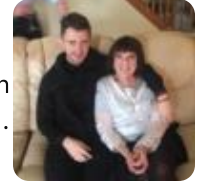
## Tribute Wall

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NR

**Nolan Ritter** shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.



My grandmother was a very unique person. The first time she really connected with me, I was in what I'd now call a religious phase due to the traditions my mother held. I remember we were at her sister Debbie's house for some family gathering and she asked me why I believed what I did. That was the first time I really questioned it, and it helped me break free from it (no disrespect to anyone who holds religious beliefs). Years later Jackie and I spent time together virtually while I was in Los Angeles during the pandemic era. She and I would talk on the phone often as well as exchanging literally hundreds of emails, photos, videos, music, and art that we made. She was so interested in everything that I was doing. She also thought that she "couldn't" understand a lot of it but to be honest she understood it all just fine, and conversed eloquently about many topics, from Frank Ocean to Olive Recipes and everything in between. I can only imagine what infinite stores of knowledge she has access to now that she's rejoined the big everything. I'll miss her dearly. Hoping to be with her again one day.

June 13 at 7:10 PM



**Anonymous** planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Jacqueline.



June 15 at 10:46 AM

DC

**Deb Cherpillod** posted:

Jackie could not have been a better sister. I like to think we both influenced each other greatly. I was once asked at the Dillard's jewelry counter if we were twins (14 years difference between us) much to her delight and my amazement. Yet another memory was the day we wore practically the same summer outfit (white t-shirt and plaid bermuda shorts that we thought looked good in our mirrors) to a backyard picnic only to realize we were twin fashion disasters. There is a photo that we keep whenever we need a lesson in humility. I will miss her dearly.

June 14 at 3:54 PM



## Tribute Wall

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DC

**Deb Cherpillod** shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.



Jackie was the oldest of six children, four sisters, with me being the youngest girl and two younger brothers. There was a 14 year difference between she and I. She came of age in the 50s and I in the late 60s early 70s. Our life experiences varied greatly. Despite the generational differences we were good friends who always were interested in each other's personal stories even though we certainly didn't always agree. We had epic telephone conversations. When we got older and were in a heated discussion that was not about to be resolved, one of us would just say "hmmm" and we knew it was time to hang up. My earliest memories of Jackie were when I was four or five years of age. She married and was out of the house when I was five. I loved being at the kitchen table listening to my older sisters and mother talk about life, working downtown, cooking, boys, fashion, jewelry, religion and politics. Even my two younger brothers liked to be in the room where it happened. Life was fun and full of laughter. Jackie had all the qualities of a first born child. She was the most photographed Kopec child and as a result she was a natural poser. She liked to be in control of how her life unfolded, me not as much. She was honest to a fault and would always settle her debt to the penny. After all, our parents would never have tolerated anything but honesty and integrity from their children as well as a strong work ethic. She was a loving daughter, sister, wife, mother, aunt, grandmother, great grandmother and friend. She understood the need for self development which she did through art, piano, gardening, tennis and golf (wearing short golf skirts into her 70s). All chased by a daily martini. Sometimes, I thought there was nothing she couldn't fix or make. She was an extrovert and had many friends who I am sure will also miss her. She could, on occasion, be competitive, me not as much, unless we were talking about the variety of birds at our backyard feeders, but after all who's counting. She did concede that I had better knife skills in the kitchen. We joked that my tombstone would read, "She Had Good Knife Skills". We both loved to shop and spent many a day at Parmatown Mall. In the day, we could shop for hours, of course for bargains, which was another lesson our mother taught us. She liked gold and diamonds and I liked silver. It is the human experience to miss our loved ones when they pass so this is not unique to me. I will miss her dearly. Oh, but to be the young girl at the kitchen table again with my family would be wonderful. My garden will be the place where her spirit blooms for the roots of many of the flowers originated in her garden. Perhaps it's time for my first martini, toasting her onto her next journey. It has been a pleasure to share a little bit of her with all of you.

June 13 at 7:10 PM



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**Stephanie Popovich** posted:

Jackie and I started to build a relationship via email and they were some of my favorite exchanges between another person. She was such a beautiful, lively soul and shared so much in the short time we grew to know one another. I remember when I first started to chat with her I was more reserved and not the best at talking to someone I hadn't met in person, but she helped me feel comfortable and open up. Not only was she a kind, loving person—she was also so talented and truly amazed me with her art and hobbies. (And she wasn't afraid to speak her mind which I loved hehe). The few times I was able to sit down next to her at a piano will always be held dear to me and I wish we had more of those times...I need all the help and she was wonderful at playing. Her art is beyond words, even if she didn't think she was the best at it, she was amazing and should have given herself more credit. Her artwork is some of my favorite to look at. The colors, the depths, the different styles. It's all so beautiful, as she was. I'm sad I didn't have more time to see or spend with Jackie, but the memories I do have of her mean so much to me and I will never forget her. I'm not the best at writing messages, but she meant so much to me in such a short amount of time. She was my family away from family, and my good friend.

June 13 at 7:10 PM



## Media

**Jacqueline Marie Ritter**

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**Nancy Zolidis** shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.

June 17 at 9:42 AM





## Media

**Jacqueline Marie Ritter**

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**Nolan Ritter** shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.

June 15 at 11:41 AM





## Media

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Deb Cherpillod shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.

June 14 at 10:22 AM





## **Memories only last if you share them**

Join us in honoring Jacqueline by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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