



Georgia "Jo" Swanson

October 12, 1934 - January 29, 2022

Georgia "Jo" Koontz Swanson - 10/12/1934 - 1/29/2022. Born in Ashland, Ohio, daughter of Arline and Franklin Koontz of Ashland. Jo is preceded in death by her brother, Dr. Franklin Koontz Jr. in 2007. She married Allan V. Swanson in 1955, and they lived in Berea, Ohio, all of their lives. She is survived by her children, Devora, Douglas (Jan), and Caryn (Dwayne); her grandchildren Mason (Miho) and Riley Losh, and Dashell Swanson, and two great grandchildren, Kai and Claire. Dr. Swanson graduated from Ashland HS in 1952; Baldwin Wallace University with a B.A. in 1956; Kent State University with M.A. in 1972; Bowling Green University with Ph.D. in 1982. Dr. Swanson taught for the Berea Schools for seven years, and subsequently at Baldwin-Wallace for 33 years, retiring in 1999. She was a member of the Phi Mu sorority. While teaching for BW, she was an active faculty member, serving as the first woman elected chair of the faculty. An ardent supporter of women, she created and maintained the COSROW column for the United Methodist Church in Berea; she also created roles for Women in History, a troupe that performs famous roles of Ohio women. As a member of the United Methodist church for over 60 years, she sang in the choir, and in 1999 was recognized by the U.M. General Board of Education recognized her in 1999 for her exemplary teaching. Additionally, she joined the BW Singers after she retired, and received BW's Outstanding Educator Award in 2006.

A Memorial Remembrance is planned for Sunday, February 13th, at 3:30 p.m. at the United Methodist Church of Berea, 170 Seminary Street, Berea, Ohio 44017. If you have a story that you would like to share with the family, please send it to info@umcb.org, where we will publish it in the bulletin of the service.

In lieu of flowers, the Swanson family would appreciate contributions to the Georgia Swanson Scholarship at Baldwin-Wallace.

Cemetery

Sunset Cemetery

6265 Columbia Road PO Box 729
North Olmsted, OH, 44070

Events

FEB
13

Memorial

03:30PM

United Methodist Church Of Berea
170 Seminary Street, Berea, OH, US, 44017

Comments



“ Thank you to all who have visited, called and shared memories of my mom. It is YOU who made her life so worthwhile and fulfilling and for that I am forever grateful. I too was shaped by her teachings and understand that I am primarily who I am, because of her. I will look forward to being in her class again at a far away school.
Jo's son- Doug

Doug Swanson - February 12 at 07:46 PM



“ Dr. Swanson “Jo”, was my academic advisor during my undergrad years at BW. She was assigned to me my freshman year, and even though I augmented my major a few times, she remained my helpful academic guide on campus. I graduated and stayed on campus for the summer after while I job-hunted in the Cleveland area. When it came time to leave, I found out that through some fluke I had a 1-credit error - and therefore didn't technically graduate. There I was, leaving my campus housing to start a new job (with a resume that now “incorrectly” said I graduated!) and I had no idea what to do next. Fortunately I was able to contact Jo just before she left for (I believe a BW sponsored trip) The UK! A few well placed calls later and she had cleared up the problem, and voila I was again, a BW grad! Dr. Swanson attended the 50th Anniversary events for WBWC in 2008. She knew my work there was important to me and made a point to congratulate me personally at the event. I always enjoyed seeing her on campus, still active in so many ways. She will remain in my memory as one of the reasons I treasure my years there. My condolences to her family, friends and fellow Yellow Jackets.

R. Todd Richards'93

Todd Richards - February 08 at 03:35 PM



“ I am saddened to learn of Jo’s passing, and send my heartfelt sympathies to her family. To say that she had an influence on my college career is an understatement. We met at Freshman Orientation in 1972, where it was her job to help this new newly-minted Yellow Jacket put together a schedule for my first quarter as a college student. (She always enjoyed reminding me that at that first meeting, I announced to her-with great conviction-“I’m going to be an ac-tor!”) Because of my theatrical aspirations, I was subsequently assigned to another faculty advisor, but as my enthusiasm for that vocation waned, I returned to Jo for comfort and advice. After a lackluster sophomore year, she took me under her wing and told me she was going to point me in the direction of teaching. She became my faculty advisor, but more importantly, she became my friend. (Among other cherished memories, I remember Friday afternoon trips to the Eastland Inn for a burger, a beer, and some frank and honest conversation.) She made good on her promise to make me a teacher, but I was unable to find a position teaching speech. After a “gap year”, I decided to study the law, which led to my legal career. But I never forgot Jo’s kindness and her friendship, and we remained in touch long past her retirement. I will miss her, but I also hope to one day have the opportunity to see her again in the next life, when I will hug her and thank her for all she meant to me.

Dick Benson - February 06 at 12:36 PM



“ ‘Jo’ was my teacher and advisor at Baldwin Wallace College. We also shared the stage in Berea Summer Theater’s production of CAMELOT. In all circumstances she was eloquent, wise, open, friendly and thoughtful. I feel blessed to have known her. I am a different person for having known her - for sitting in her office and talking about learning - about connection - about recognizing the need for being fully oneself all the while respecting other’s need for the same. Thank you, Jo. Thank you Alan and Dev. Love to her family and all who knew her.

Dave Anderson - February 04 at 10:25 AM



“ I am Lor Miller Hanson and I am the person I am today in great part because of my “Aunt Jo”. Aunt Jo knew me from birth because I had the great fortune to be born into the “Berea Gang”. The Berea Gang is a group of couples who became best friends as students at B-W. The core group of the Berea Gang who spent most of their lives in Berea were Aunt Jo and Uncle Al Swanson, Aunt Katie and Uncle Neil Fort, and my parents, Helen and Bill Miller. Later, JoAnn and Gerry Boggs returned to Berea and resumed their place in the Berea Gang as another Aunt/ Uncle pair. I had the luxury of being surrounded by love and care by these amazing adults my entire life, even to this day. These people were not only each other’s set friends, but functioned as extended family. They have all taught me so much. Aunt Jo taught me what it takes to be a woman in our world and how that is not always easy. She taught me about serving others in many ways. She taught me how incredibly rewarding it is to pursue higher education and career goals that superseded any opportunities women had in the past. She modeled for me how to love your family, your neighbors, your church while working to fulfill one’s own dreams and aspirations. She taught me that being an intellectual female was important and right. She taught me that my ideas were as important as anyone else’s and I had the right, actually the responsibility, to speak up for myself and those who experience injustice. Through all the developmental stages of my life, Aunt Jo was the single most influential person on the formation of my zeitgeist. She not only taught me with words and stories, but Aunt Jo walked the walk. She lived her beliefs and convictions out loud and modeled the woman I, and so many others, wanted to become. Surrounded by the love of my parents, and the love and enduring support from my OTHER sets of PARENTS, Aunt Jo and Uncle Al, Aunt Katie and Uncle Neil, Aunt JoAnn and Uncle Jerry, I have been able to become who I was meant to be and have been able to live a fulfilling, adventurous and very resilient life! I thank you and love you, Aunt Jo, and all the Berea Gang! February 2022

Lori Hanson - February 04 at 10:15 AM



“ Jo Swanson - she's been part of my Berea Group Family my whole life through! Jo was such a fun-filled, smart, and loving woman. You could not have asked for a more supportive friend for every milestone in your life. I was touched when she welcomed both of my daughters as sisters in Phi Mu at Baldwin Wallace. My heart goes out to the Swanson family and their friends as she will be greatly missed. Much love.

Diane Fort-Alloway - February 04 at 09:03 AM



“ Jo preceded me in joining the BW faculty by a couple of years and was a young role model at a time when there were still relatively few women on the faculty. She was respected by faculty and administrators as well as students. A great colleague. Good memories. She did it all very well.

Margaret Brooks-Terry - February 05 at 11:10 AM



“ A great colleague and friend. Shared some seminars and workshops, a real professional. A real asset for BW.

Bonita - February 06 at 10:53 AM