



Judy Jo Phillips

August 12, 1948 - July 4, 2014

Judy Jo (Graff) Phillips--Judy Jo is a name known by so many in Murphysboro and Southern Illinois. She was a beloved daughter, sister, wife, aunt, cousin, Mom, Grandma and friend. To know Judy Jo is to have loved Judy Jo; she never met a stranger and her friends became her family.

Judy Jo attended elementary school in Gorham, IL and graduated from Murphysboro High School in 1966. Her working years began at the Murphysboro IGA, Graff Family Restaurant, Carbondale Memorial Hospital's Pink Geranium Gift Shop and then at SIUC Student Health Program. She began her SIUC career in 1975 when Muriel Narve hired her as the Medical Secretary to the Lab and X-ray Dept. She was a Medical Transcriptionist and Secretary to the Medical Chief of Staff and served in many roles with the Wellness Center, SIU Athletics and ultimately as the Executive Administrative Assistant to the Student Health Program Director. She retired from SIUC Student Health Services in December 2011 after 30 years of dedicated service to SIUC, its students and as friend and surrogate Mom to so many. Judy Jo maintained her SIUC ties through Administrative and Professional Organization lunches, monthly breakfasts and lunches with so many of her former co-workers, peers and ultimately dear friends. Judy Jo and David loved to go to SIUC Football games with the Alumni Association and fans.

Judy Jo loved to care and do for so many. She left a legacy as PTA parent,

carnival coordinator and spook house creator extraordinaire at McElvain Elementary School during her children's elementary school years. She led a few Girl Scout Troops, taught many second graders First Communion CCD classes at St. Andrew Parish in Murphysboro, and was involved with MHS Athletic Banquets. Judy Jo always welcomed her kids' friends during their teenage years with home cooked sloppy joes, chocolate sheet cake and "morning after" breakfasts following a sleep over. She mentored many SIU student workers and was initiated as a Sigma Kappa sister in 1992 after serving as an Advisor to SIU's Gamma Kappa Chapter.

Upon becoming a Grandma in 2001, Judy Jo fully dedicated herself to being the best Grandma Judy Jo a child could wish. This was a role she was truly destined to play. She was famous for her tea parties, Camp Grandma Judy Jo in the summer, swimming in her pool and playing "Marco Polo," baking cookies, manicures, pedicures, picnics at Turley Park & Castle Park, trips to the dollar store, homework tutor and generally indulging every whim of her 5 grandchildren. Grandma Judy Jo provided unconditional love and support to Katherine, Xavier, Amelia, Brady and Bryce.

Her social circles included the same Bunco Group of ladies for more than 30 years. She belonged to the Jackson County Happy Homemakers until her recent health decline. With the Happy Homemakers she planned multiple successful Fall Harvest Breakfasts to raise scholarship funds for local high school students. The Jackson County Home and Community Education HEA recruited her in 2012. She loved meeting with the Board of ladies and coordinating educational programs. A great source of pride and joy was becoming involved with the Murphysboro Apple Festival and hosting the Queen's Scholarship Tea in September 2013. Judy Jo opened her home to the Apple Festival Queen Contestants, donors and committee. She relished in the joy of sharing her lovely home and playing hostess to her home town friends.

The First Lutheran Church of Murphysboro was held close to her heart as she was an active member of the church and on the Church Counsel. Judy Jo continued the legacy that her parents, Raymond & Louise Graff, began so many years before. She enjoyed the simplest tasks of filling communion glasses to the making of decisions that improved the whole church family.

Judy Jo was dedicated to her immediate and extended family, assuming the role of Matriarch. She loved planning and hosting monthly Graff Cousin lunches, Christmas gatherings, family reunions, birthdays and her favorite, 4th of July picnics. Invited or not, everyone was always welcomed with her fabulous smile and warmest hugs.

Judy Jo married David Phillips in 2001 on Valentine's Day. They were friends and the best of companions to each other. She is survived by her husband, David; her daughter & son-in-law, Beth & David Tortorici of Lombard, IL; son, Jimmy Borgsmiller of Murphysboro; step-son & daughter-in-law, Jason & Stephanie Phillips. Her grandchildren include Katherine Louise and Amelia Lillian Tortorici of Lombard, IL; Xavier Fulton Borgsmiller of Murphysboro and Brady & Bryce Phillips of Carterville. Her surviving brothers and sister-in-law are Butch & Linda Graff of Huntingburg, IN, and Raymond Keith Graff of Dallas, Texas. Her nieces and nephews include Cheryl Graff of Winslow, IN; Becky (and Phil) Zehr of Huntingburg, IN; Zak Graff of Los Angeles, CA; and Logan (and Lindsey) Graff of Frisco, Texas; and grand-nephews & niece, Cole & Cate Graff and Adam Zehr. She leaves behind many beloved cousins and extended family. Judy Jo was preceded in death by her parents, Raymond and Louise Graff.

Services will be held at 11 am on Wednesday, July 9, 2014 in First Lutheran Church in Murphysboro, with Rev. Ken Staib officiating. Burial will be in Mount

Joy Cemetery. Visitation will be from 5 to 8 pm Tuesday, July 8, at Pettett Funeral Home in Murphysboro and 10 to 11 am Wednesday at the church. Memorials may be made to Coach Kill Cancer Fund, First Lutheran Church of Murphysboro, Mount Joy Cemetery and Southern Illinois Hospice - Blue West Team. For more information, please visit www.pettettfuneralhome.com.

Tribute Wall



“ Crain Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Judy Jo Phillips



Crain Funeral Home - July 04, 2014 at 12:00 AM



“ Judy Jo Phillips

October 23, 2023 at 06:26 AM



“ lit a candle in memory of Judy Jo Phillips



November 07, 2014 at 12:21 PM



“ Dave & family: So very sorry for your loss. May God comfort you during this difficult time.

Sam Pollack - July 16, 2014 at 05:33 PM



“ lit a candle in memory of Judy Jo Phillips



July 09, 2014 at 11:46 PM



“ Judy Jo's family and friends are all in my thoughts and prayers- the world has really lost someone quite special. She was one of the kindest, sweetest people I ever met. A true gem. Her bubbly personality could light up any room. From the minute she met you, she made you feel good...and that is truly a gift. Her voice and spirit will forever be in my thoughts. God bless.

Christi Mathis - July 09, 2014 at 05:01 PM



“ Thank you Judy Jo for your unwavering friendship and love. I will see you again:)

Paula Smith Feigenbaum - July 09, 2014 at 04:52 PM



“ Judy Jo was one of those people that you meet once and you feel like you've been best friends with forever. I've only known her a few years, but the optimism and contagious smile she always had, have inspired me from day one. God must have truly needed her to come to him early-- otherwise I can't imagine anyone else I would have had more confidence in to be able to overcome this disease. She will always be on my short list of the most amazing people I've ever met.

Amy Barbeau - July 09, 2014 at 10:26 AM

CR

“ Dear Jason and Family my thoughts and prayers are with you! God be with you at this time. Judy Jo was and is truly an inspiration for many!

Collette Ross - July 09, 2014 at 09:59 AM

SB

“ After just one conversation, you can't help but be in awe of Judy Jo's wonderful spirit. We ran into her on one of her many visits and in the course of our chat, she was so open about her life experiences that led her to David and how God challenges all of us to find our purpose in life. Is it possible that she was carrying her angel's wings even on earth? Beth and Dave, we are so sorry for your loss and our thoughts are with you during this very difficult time, but know that she lives on in you and your children.

Steve and Joni Brown - July 08, 2014 at 10:33 PM

BG

“ I've never known anyone as warm and loving and genuine as Judy. She lives in my earliest happy memories. I can remember her carrying me around when I was just a baby and barely able to talk. When I was very young, I thought she was so much older and wiser than me, although she was only 5 years older. As we grew up, I realized we were very close in age but she remained much wiser.

Her dad and my dad were cousins. In our early years, her mom and my mom were best friends. Both our families lived on nearby farms where Kinkaid Lake is today. Judy, as a child was just as special as she is as an adult. No one was more fun or could make you feel as special. Going to her house to play was the best fun and fills my earliest, happiest memories still today. She decorated her play houses as elaborately as she entertained as an adult. She had a play house in the grape arbor, in the hay loft, and in an out building on the farm. We played out elaborate fantasies in those play houses. Each scenario beginning with someone saying, "play like you are this and I am that and we are whatever." And the play would go on for hours, pausing only for her mom, Louise's wonderful meals. On "butchering" days, I remember ice skating all along the creeks on their farm all day until we could barely walk. And as wonderful as Judy was, she also had the best brothers (Butch and Keith) who were always so kind to me even tho I was younger. These three being my first play mates, I had no inkling until much later in life that it was possible for kids to be mean sometimes.

I know that I am but one of many who are overwhelmed at such a precious life force and bright light leaving us here alone too soon. My other cousin, Theresa, said it best tonight when she said, "You know, things will never be the same."

Barbie Graff - July 08, 2014 at 09:21 PM

NH

“ Unforgettable! That is the word to describe Judy Jo. She was truly a genuine woman. Always that smile, the hello, and the conversation that would take a person back into time or the future. She will be missed by so many. But she has blessed us all by her presence. Love to her family. Nancy

Nancy VanCloostere Harsy - July 08, 2014 at 03:47 PM

WF

“ Beth, Jimmy, and family,

Judy Jo was always full of love and welcomed everyone into her arms and I am blessed to have known her. May the memory of her gorgeous smile and her contagious laughter fill your hearts!

*Our sincere condolences,
Michelle, Dave, Aiden and Delaney Watkiss*

Watkiss Family - July 08, 2014 at 03:29 PM

AF

“ We are so sorry for your loss. Our thoughts and prayers are with you all at this difficult time. Your mom was a beautiful person with a heart of gold. She will be deeply missed by all who had the pleasure of knowing "Judy Jo." May you find strength and comfort as you reflect on all your memories together.

Amy Gould,Carolyn Novack and family - July 08, 2014 at 10:53 AM

SC

“ I met Judy Jo several years ago and first and last time I ever saw her she was the same hugging, smiling, happy loving person, a true inspiration to all. I will always remember her beautiful smile and "well hi how are you". God has certainly taken an angel home. We will miss her here but rejoice one day with her again. Prayers to all her family and friends.

Sue Chamness - July 07, 2014 at 11:53 PM

SW

“ Beth,
Your entire family is in my thoughts and prayers

Sheila Wilcox - July 07, 2014 at 11:54 AM



“ lit a candle in memory of Judy Jo Phillips



July 06, 2014 at 11:59 PM

MS

“ Prayers for all the family

Mary schnur - July 06, 2014 at 08:31 PM