



Joan "Joanie" Prentice Durgin

December 7, 1942 - December 24, 2022

Joan "Joanie" Prentice Durgin, age 80, died peacefully, surrounded by family, on Saturday, December 24, 2022, in Scarborough, ME, after a long battle with dementia. Joan, always loving, kind, and compassionate, was born on December 7, 1942, in New Orleans, LA to Betty and Robert Lipton.

She was a lifelong Toledo civil servant and family planning educator and was adored by all who knew her. Her family and friends cherished her warm heart, long hugs, laugh, infectious smile and her love of baking, flowers, gardening, family gatherings and holidays. She taught her family the importance of being positive, philanthropic, hardworking, and appreciative.

Joan was raised in Shaker Heights, OH. She graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree from Lake Forest College in Lake Forest, IL and with a Master of Education degree from The University of Toledo. In 1972, Joan began her over 30 year career in the Toledo Public School System. She worked as a family life specialist, where she developed and implemented human growth and development programs. As the Toledo Public School's Coordinator of Health Services, she was instrumental in the development of comprehensive school clinics in central-city elementary schools. She also expanded the school nursing program.

When Joan was working as Director of Health services for TPS in the early

1990s, two sixth-grade girls became pregnant. Joan felt it important to find an alternative option for all pregnant or parenting teenage girls in the Toledo area. Thereafter, Polly Fox Academy, named after Joan's mentor, was born. For sixteen years, Joan served as the Founder and Development Director. Polly Fox Academy's mission was to assist young women to find a path to the future that included graduation, post-secondary education, parenting, and employability skills.

Through her passion, love, and dedication, Joan tirelessly advocated for advancing the lives of young parenting and pregnant teens. People who knew Joan described her as an innovative leader, tireless, and a pioneer on behalf of young women.

In 2009, in recognition of her outstanding contributions in education, Joan was inducted into the Ohio Women's Hall of Fame. She was also a recipient of the Milestone Award through the Toledo YWCA. In 2013, she received the Toledo Area Jefferson Award for her decades of commitment to community service with organizations such as the Toledo Area AIDS Task Force, Coalition for Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention, Toledo Day Nursery, Juvenile Diabetes Foundation, Ohio State School-Based Health Centers, Phoenix Academy, Polly Fox Academy, the United Way Women's Initiative, and Toledo Children's Hospital. Joan also served on the boards of the Junior League of Toledo, the Toledo Museum of Art Membership Drive, committees for Promedica Hospital, and St Michael's Episcopal Church.

Joan is survived by her husband, Rod Durgin of 39 years, her children, daughters Courtney (Jason) Kuhn, Lindsey (Sean) Hickey, Meredith Durgin, Leslie Durgin (Erik) Szymczak, and son Peter (Beth) Handwork. She is also survived by 8 beautiful grandchildren: Alexandra, Graham, Caden, Phoebe, Whitney, Will, Fionn, and Eva. She was predeceased by her brother Robert "Chip" Lipton.

Over the years, Joan enjoyed family vacations skiing “out west” and summer vacations in Maine.

The family wishes to give heartfelt thanks to all of Joan’s caregivers and especially to Sarah Shew, a dear lifelong family friend who provided incredible loving care, navigation, and emotional support to Joan and the entire family. They also wish to thank Piper Shores in Scarborough, ME for providing Joan with excellent care and kindness during the remaining months of her life. The family is grateful for the love, devotion and compassion Rod provided to Joan throughout her illness.

A memorial service and celebration of Joan’s life will be held at 10:00am on Saturday, May 20, 2023, at St. Michael's in the Hills Episcopal Church and will be followed by a reception at 11:30am at The Inverness Club. Joan loved spring and spring flowers, if you are attending, please wear festive colors in honor of her.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation in Joan’s name to Planned Parenthood, the Alzheimer’s Association, or St. Michael’s in the Hills. Arrangements have been made by the Ansberg-West Funeral Directors, 419-472-7633. To send her family online condolences, please visit www.ansberg-west.com.

“ "don't cry because it is over, smile because it happened”

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

MAY 20. 10:00 AM (ET)

St. Michael's in the Hills
Ottawa Hills, OH 43615

Reception

MAY 20. 11:30 AM.

Inverness Club
Toledo, OH

Tribute Wall

LH

“ *Joanie was a hero. She accomplished what others were afraid to try. I will always be grateful for her work. Lee HakeI*

Lee HakeI - May 17, 2023 at 09:03 AM

TV

“ *Rod & Family, Sincere condolences. Though I have not had the pleasure of seeing Joan for several years, I have many fond memories of her gracious & gentle nature. May God be with you all at this most difficult time. Tom Vogtsberger*

Thomas Vogtsberger - May 09, 2023 at 01:00 PM

JD

“ *Nick and I are sorry we will be out of town on May 20th. We are thinking of you, Rod, and all of Joanie's family. Sincerely, Judy and Nick Dye*

Judy Dye - May 08, 2023 at 01:14 PM

GM

“ *Rod, I'm very sorry for your loss. I really enjoyed having you both as clients.*

Gary Miller

Gary Miller - May 07, 2023 at 02:12 PM

JW

“ Joanie was such a wonderful person! I knew her well through Junior League, Toledo Day Nursery and Inverness. She did so much for the community, her wonderful family and her friends. I hope to honor her life on May 20. Jane Willis

Jane Willis - May 07, 2023 at 01:13 PM

KB

“ I am sad to hear about Joan's passing. I had the great fortune and pleasure to collaborate with her on both the Polly Fox program and the TPS School Nurses Advisory Board. She was a vital force in Toledo, a great mentor and exactly what TPS and its students needed! She left a tremendous legacy. I miss her dearly. Kathy Boehm

Kathy Boehm - January 09, 2023 at 03:20 PM

NK

“ Joan was such a mentor to me during my time working at Polly Fox Academy. Her ability to see the best in everyone was remarkable. She was an incredible role model and person. I will forever be grateful that she was a part of my life. Sending love and condolences to her family. Nicole Kolm Valdivia

Nicole Kolm-Valdivia - January 05, 2023 at 07:17 PM

EH

“ So sad to lose such a lovely lady. Joanie was extraordinarily kind and helpful. Despite her very busy life, she went out of her way to be welcoming and supportive. I was blessed to call her friend.

Ellen Hoover

Ellen Hoover - January 05, 2023 at 11:00 AM

CE

“ To the family of one amazing women, enjoy the memories!! Cindy Kusz

Cindy Kusz TPS Health/Physical Education - January 04, 2023 at 09:03 PM

JM

“ Joanie was one of the most supportive, productive and caring persons throughout her Toledo Public school career. Working with her made a huge impact on my life . There was never a time that she would not stop to lend a helpful ear no matter the situation. Those who knew her were given the gift to experience her friendship and deep concern for others. Missed seeing her these past years but wish her precious family well. With sympathy, Jalna and Ken MacLaren

Jalna MacLaren - January 04, 2023 at 10:46 AM

ST

“ Joan was one of the most caring, giving, and kind persons I have ever met. She was such a mentor to me and it was a privilege to work with her for over a 25 year span. Sherry and I were so touched that her and Rod took the time to attend our wedding in Maine in 2014. Our thoughts are with you and your family and may lovi g memories bring you comfort. Susan Telljohann and Sherry Tripepi

Susan Telljohann - January 02, 2023 at 11:56 AM

BM

“ Rod, Meredith & family ~ I am so sorry for your loss. My thoughts and prayers are with you, during this difficult time.
Beth Myers

Beth Myers - January 01, 2023 at 01:12 PM

TH

“ I will always remember Joanie’s kindness and compassion towards me throughout the years. Such an amazing soul and you could feel that she genuinely cared. It was always such a pleasure to bump into her and Rod. Much love and prayers for her family and all that knew her. ❤️

Teri Burns Hagemeyer - December 31, 2022 at 09:28 AM