

Remembering the Life....

Joan Ahlfs, 76 of Ottertail, Minnesota died Wednesday, April 30, 2025, at Perham Health in Perham.

Joan Marie Ahlfs was born on September 9, 1948, in Parkers Prairie, Minnesota to James and Esther (Sandahl) Underhill, the tenth of eleven children. She attended country school in Folden Hills, graduating from Henning High School in 1966. After graduation, she ventured to the Minneapolis area, working at Musingwear. Completing only the book portion of Cosmetology school at Wadena Tech School in 1975, she missed a career in her true calling in life, which is that of a beauty connoisseur.

In Joan's first marriage, two children were born, Stephanie while living in Ponca City, Oklahoma and Jonathan when they returned to Vining. Joan married Larry Ahlfs on December 16, 1978. Together, Larry and Joan built their walkout rambler on Larry's home dairy farm on West Leaf Lake, spending many long weekends and late nights in completing this building project. Venturing beyond homemaker, Joan picked up her first part-time gig at a clothing boutique in Wadena, soon after joining Dorrow's Mink farm – a seasonal job full of women gossiping, bantering with constant stories coming home to the dinner table. Soon after, she joined the crew of the Henning Hatchery, taking on the unique profession of sexing engineer. Joan's last work role she was deeply dedicated too, and incredibly proud, was caring for severely developmentally disabled residents at a Wadena group home for 10 years, showering her residents with care, compassion, grace and love. Larry passed away on November 19, 2020. Joan had resided for the past 14 months at Perham Living.

Setting the facts of it all aside, Joan's joy was found in the word grandma, creating new meaning for spoil them rotten; indulgent the word from grandson, Sam. Every grandson was her 'favorite'. An eternal night owl, every slumber party was a guarantee of midnight strawberry or raspberry sundaes, or malts whirled to perfection served in the OG McD malt cups. Shenanigans were always present, one of the epic - an unscathed figure eight spinout in an ice storm – Noah, Jack, Sam and grandma still intact at its end. Joan even entertained deer hunting with her son, Jon a season or two, landing herself a six-point buck. No meal was complete, as Nick would add without the perfection of her mashed potatoes to top it all off.

Words used to describe grandma by her lot of grandsons – tough, resilient, fun, spicy, sassy, silly, stubborn, sweet, outgoing, courageous, a fighter, frank, snappy, persuasive, tardy at times, caring, passionate hero, indulgent and most of all - loving.

Joan is survived by two children, Stephanie (Brad Herzberg) Becker of Fergus Falls, her sons Nick, Jack and Colin; and Jonathan Wiek of Deer Creek, his sons Keenan, Dylan (great-grandson, Wesson), Noah, and Sam; sisters, Lorraine (Jerry) Erickson and Rita (Bernal) Cichy, brother Darrol Underhill; and sisters-in-law Mary Underhill and Pat Ahlfs, many nieces and nephews and great nieces and nephews.

She is preceded in death by her husband, Larry Ahlfs, parents, James and Esther Underhill; sisters, Gloria (Leo) Hemmerlin, Joyce (Doyle) Miller, Shirley (Gerald) Suchy and Judy Underhill; brothers, Daniel, Robert (Lorraine) and Dennis.

Blessed be the Memory of Joan Ahlfs



Service For
Joan and Larry

September 9, 1948
April 30, 2025

January 20, 1945
November 19, 2020



Joan and Larry Ahlfs

Memorial Service

Saturday, May 10, 2025 at 2:00 PM
Glende-Nilson Funeral Home
Fergus Falls, Minnesota

Prelude.....Adam Dorfner
Invocation and Prayer
"You Raise Me Up".....Josh Grobin
Scripture and Poem..... Jon Wiek
 Psalm 61 ~ Dust in the Wind
MemoriesStephanie Becker
"I Wish Grandpas Never Died"..... Riely Green
"Wind Beneath My Wings"Bette Midler
Message..... Reverend Mark Johnson
"I Can Only Imagine" MercyMe
The Lord's Prayer
Commendation
Prayers..... Reverend Mark Johnson

Urnbearers

Joan and Larry's Grandsons

Interment

Nidaros Lutheran Cemetery
Rural Clitherall, Minnesota

Appreciation

Our family is grateful for your attendance at this service. Your many expressions of kindness and love are deeply appreciated. Please join family and friends for lunch and fellowship following the service.

Arrangements by

Glende-Nilson Funeral Home ~ Fergus Falls ~ www.GlendeNilson.com

**Dust in the Wind ~
By Jonathan Wiek**

Ashes to ashes, dust to dust,
Life goes by fast, and then we perish.
Only God, knows, the memories we truly cherish.
We fly, through the mountains,
And deep, through the trees
All the way, to the rising seas.
Like an eagle, in the sky
Destined, to prosper.
In the end, all we are,
Is a feather in the wind.

Cover photo is last sunset, Joan and Stephanie participated and reveled in together, from her Perham Hospital room, April 24th.