

GOD hath not promised

Skies always blue.

Flower strewn pathways

All our lives through;

God hath not promised

Sun without rain,

Joy without sorrow,

Peace without pain.

But GOD hath promised

*Strength* for the day,  
Rest for the labor,  
Light for the way.

Grace for the trials  
help from above,

Unfailing sympathy.

*Undying love.*

I N L O V I N G  
*Memory*

*Judy Ann Ahrens*

September 6, 1948 † July 31, 2024

***FUNERAL SERVICE***

Monday, August 5, 2024 11:00 AM

St. Mary's Catholic Church

Alexandria, Minnesota

***OFFICIANT***

Father Dan Ruprecht

***READERS***

Kellen OBrien and John OBrien

***MUSICAL SELECTIONS BY***

Erin Takle and Kristi Wussow

***PALLBEARERS***

Dave OBrien John OBrien

Tyson Lynch Tim Lynch

Jim Skarie Brian Collins

***HONORARY PALLBEARERS***

Mark Brossard and Jack Skarie

***INTERMENT***

St. Mary's Cemetery

Alexandria, Minnesota

**Judy Ann Ahrens**, a fun, caring, feisty and loving daughter, sister, wife, aunt, Mom and Nana passed away on July 31, 2024.

Born on September 6, 1948, in Burlington Memorial Hospital in Burlington, WI, the second of five children, she spent her early years nearby in Waterford enjoying child-led, loosely-organized sports and games, giving the neighborhood boys stiff competition in baseball, basketball, and football. She consistently modeled good behavior- taking her role as a big sister seriously. She shouldered a lot of responsibility, doing her chores well, being a good student, and watching over her younger siblings. She was a sought-after babysitter and worked on a nearby farm collecting eggs, bailing hay, shoveling manure to earn a little money. In high school, she was involved with choir, the newspaper and the yearbook; unfortunately, she was unable to play sports because they weren't offered for girls at that time. She graduated from Waterford High School, and without much hesitation hopped a train to Minneapolis where she graduated from a vocational program for travel agency. She began working at a telephone company in downtown Minneapolis. One evening, she went to a party and set her sights on the man that would become her husband, John Ahrens. She struck up a conversation with him and they started dating. On October 30, 1970, at Christ the King Catholic Church, they started their journey together. They continued living in the metro area, spending time with John's nearby family and began being 'weekend warriors' taking camping, fishing, hiking, hunting, canoeing in the greater Alexandria area- Judy would often do photography on these trips. They played in various softball, tennis and racquetball leagues. They also enjoyed trips to visit her family back home in the Wisconsin area. Judy loved her parents, siblings, in-laws, nieces and nephews and did well keeping in touch with them, despite the distance. In 1977, tired of driving to the area where they vacationed, they bought Sun and Sport Resort on Lake Oscar. A little over a year later their daughter, Julie, was born. Together, they ran the resort, with John doing taxes on the side and earning his CPA degree, until the lake flooded, ending the resort. Judy then went to the Alexandria Technical College, graduating with an administrative professional degree, and was just job hunting when she was in a car accident that caused debilitating headaches and back pain for several years. John continued doing taxes and Judy continued to manage his business and volunteered at St. Mary's school. In 1993 they moved to Alexandria. In 1996 John was diagnosed with Melanoma and died 5 years later, days after Julie married Dave O'Brien. After John's death, Judy was not herself- she missed him terribly. It wasn't until 2005, when she became a grandparent (she liked being called Nana because it sounded younger), to John O'Brien, that the twinkle in her eye came back. Dave and Julie and her grandchildren John, Jayme, Kellen and Kaitlyn were everything to her. During infancy, she provided daycare for them. As toddlers and until starting school, she had weekly 'nana days' with each. When they were in school, she picked them up each week (usually this involved a stop for treats) and came over to Dave and Julie's for supper. In the summers, they enjoyed sleeping over at her house. As they grew, she loved being their biggest fan, clapping loudly at their games, races, concerts, recitals, and plays. She often said how incredibly proud she was of the life Julie and Dave built and she beamed with pride whenever talking about her grandchildren. Judy loved going out to eat and going for a drive. She kept up on current events and followed Minnesota and Wisconsin sports teams.

Judy's true gift was her ability to truly listen to others. She was never quick to judge, but was always quick to offer comfort, an encouraging word, and praise. Judy was also known for her strength and spirited temperament.

Judy was also a tough person. She had been doctoring for hip/back pain for a year before learning she had no cartilage in either hip, so she had both replaced within 6 months. In 2022, she had a small stroke and learned she had vascular dementia. She worked hard through all her PT and OT to return home. In 2023, the effects of vascular dementia began to catch up to her and she was also diagnosed with Alzheimers. In 2024, she battled through various infections due to the cellulitis in her legs, and eventually, was unable to continue living at home- needing a higher level of care than what home health and her family could provide. She was admitted to memory care at Pelican Bay with the support of hospice and soon after, passed away from sepsis. She was given treasured time to say goodbye to her loved ones.

Judy is survived by her beloved daughter, Julie O'Brien and her son-in-law, David O'Brien of Alexandria, grandchildren, John, Jayme, Kellen and Kaitlyn O'Brien; sisters, Joan Lynch (Timothy) of Burlington, WI and Jane Brossard (Mark) of Waterford, WI, and brothers, Jack (Diane) Skarie of Burlington, WI and Jim Skarie of Las Vegas, NV along with her nieces and nephews. Judy was preceded in death by her husband John Ahrens, her brother-in-law Mark Brossard, her parents Harold and Jean (Tauscher) Skarie, her father-in-law Thomas (Jeff) Ahrens and mother-in-law Helen (Brazil) Ahrens.

# In Loving

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## MEMORY



*Judy Ann Ahrens*

September 6, 1948 ~ July 31, 2024