

## In Loving Memory



## Juanita Rose Ehrke

November 25, 1924 ~ March 16, 2021

Juanita Rose Robbins Ehrke, 96, passed away peacefully on March 16, 2021 in Cambridge, Wisconsin. She was blessed with good health for most of her 96-1/2 years. More important, she lived life to the fullest, always curious about people and places near and far. Juanita gave her children many gifts throughout her life. She gave them life, the love of music and the arts, the desire to continuously educate oneself, appreciation for all that is beautiful in nature, the value of long-lasting friendships, the sheer joy of a hearty laugh, the understanding that the less fortunate need our help and the ability to feel the magic of the holidays. And she had one last gift for her family: She held on until her assisted living residence started allowing visitors again, which was in late February. Juanita's love for her family and determination to see them once again allowed her entire family to spend many hours with her during her last weeks, holding her hands, reminiscing about fun times, singing her favorite songs and hymns and showering her with love. Juanita Rose Robbins was born on the Jefferson County farm of her parents, Linda Porter Robbins and Alfred Robbins, near Waterloo, Wisconsin, on November 25, 1924. Juanita had three younger siblings: Alfred Robbins, Jr., Doris Wilke and Ferne Anderson. Juanita's older brother, Lester, died in infancy. Her family moved to Highwood, Illinois, in the early 1930s because Juanita's father had taken a position as a conductor with the North Shore Railroad in the Chicago area. The family moved back to rural Waterloo after Juanita's father lost his job as a conductor due to the Great Depression and resumed farming operations. Because transportation to high schools was not provided during Juanita's high school years, Juanita took a position as housekeeper for several families in Lake Mills in return for her room and board while she attended Lake Mills High School. She graduated from there in 1942. Recently, Juanita recalled how her chemistry teacher referred to her as his "star" pupil. Given Juanita's affinity for the sciences, she enrolled in nursing school at the Mount Sinai School of Nursing in Milwaukee after she graduated from high school. Once situated in Milwaukee, Juanita changed course and enrolled in the Milwaukee Business Institute to pursue a business career. She paid for her education by working at the candy counter at Gimbel's department store in Milwaukee. She earned an associate's degree from the Milwaukee Business Institute and returned to her parents' farm after graduation. At the age of 16, Juanita attended a relative's anniversary celebration that was held at The Music Box in Johnson Creek. There she was asked to dance by Frederick ("Bud") Ehrke. Juanita and Fred lost touch with one another while Juanita pursued her post-high school degree and Bud was drafted by the Marine Corp and ultimately fought in the Battle of Okinawa. Bud was injured in May of 1945 and spent a year convalescing at various Naval hospitals. During Bud's convalescence, Juanita and Bud re-connected and were married on November 2, 1946, at Rockdale Lutheran Church.

Juanita and Bud raised four children: Alan, Patricia, Christine and Tracy. The family lived for many years on the family farm on County A in rural Fort Atkinson. In 1971, Juanita, Bud and Tracy moved to Deerfield where they made their home for over 45 years. Juanita was very involved alongside her school-age children with organizations such as Campfire Girls, Girl Scouts, 4-H, PTA and Sunday School. She was a Sunday School teacher for many years and sang in the church choir. Juanita was the biggest fan of her four children as she cheered on teams and cheerleading squads from the stands at football and basketball games and from the audience at concerts, plays and musicals. Juanita had many interests. She studied Spanish as an adult and had taught herself to play piano and guitar. She enjoyed classical music and all types of musicals, attending many musical performances in both the Madison and Chicago areas. Juanita was an accomplished bridge player and played bridge often in the Deerfield community. Juanita was very involved with Lutheran and Methodist churches for decades and was famous for her fresh strawberry pie, which was a staple at the annual Deerfield Days church bake sale. She was a baker extraordinaire and an excellent cook and never hesitated to donate her creations when called upon. She was politically active and worked at the Deerfield polling place for many years. For 16 years, Juanita was the assistant to several professors at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She was assistant to the chairs of the Educational Administration Department and ultimately became the assistant to the Vice Chancellor of the Cooperative Extension Services at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Throughout her life, Juanita was eager to take advantage of travel opportunities. Depending on where her children happened to be at any given time, Juanita packed her suitcase and jetted off to places such as Japan, Hong Kong, the Philippines, England, France, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Spain, Canada, Mexico, Grand Cayman, Puerto Rico, Alaska, Hawaii and many of the contiguous 48 states. In 1959, Juanita and Bud were eager to take their children to the recently-opened Walt Disney Land in Anaheim. She often visited her children and grandchildren in California, Utah, Illinois and Wisconsin and attended many of her grandchildren's dance performances, soccer and volleyball games, birthday parties and graduation ceremonies. She delighted in making new acquaintances and celebrating all special occasions. Juanita was known by many for her sense of fashion and brightly-colored outfits along with her desire to engage in heart-to-heart conversations.

Messenger

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### Date of Birth

November 25, 1924  
Waterloo, Wisconsin

### Entered Eternal Life

March 16, 2021  
Cambridge, Wisconsin

### Celebration of Life

Saturday, July 17, 2021, 1:00 PM  
Deerfield Lutheran Church  
Deerfield, Wisconsin

### Presiding

Vicar Sarah Key

### Final Resting Place

North Oakland Cemetery  
Town of Oakland, Wisconsin

*After the rain  
the gray clouds divide  
and the sun dries the tears  
the storm left behind.  
Your memory comes  
like a soft summer breeze  
that drifts through the grass  
between petals and leaves.  
The earth blooms again;  
flowers lift their bowed heads.  
Though our grief is not gone,  
we remember instead  
That the love in our hearts  
will outlast this pain,  
and that sunshine brings healing  
after the rain.*

- D. Eberbach



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