



Margaret G. Koehler

FEB 22, 1925 - APR 2, 2023



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Margaret Koehler's Eulogy

Margaret Georgiana Coffey was born on President George Washington's Birthday (22 February 1925) in Chicago Illinois. Margaret's mom thought it was an honor to be born on Washington's Birthday and consequently gave Mom the middle name of Georgiana. By-the-way Mom hated her middle name.

Her parents were Charles Joseph Coffey and Lillian Frederica Coffey; they were also born in Chicago Illinois. Lillian's maiden name was Deman. Charles roots were from a full blooded Irish Roman Catholic family while Lillian's roots were from a full blooded German Lutheran family. Mom never found out how her folks joined together with such a diverse background. Mom stated that when the two families would get together, religious arguments would commence destroying any party atmosphere. After a few years the families just stopped seeing each other and drifted apart. Consequently, Mom never got to know her blood relatives of the Coffey family.

From the stories Mom told about her family, Lillian (mom's mother) was a competitive roller skating dancer and won many competitions a crossed Chicago. Mom's dad worked for the rail road company as a dockyard workman. Mom did not follow in her mother's roller skating steps. However, Mom loved to dance, which drove her to participate in all the high school dances and other social night clubs. Mom also loved to sing and sang with some dance band groups in her youth. She got so good at dance hall singing that she wanted to sing with one of her dance hall groups as a career; but her dad didn't support that path for her future. Mom recorded a few songs on 78 records of which we still have.

Mom told me that during her youth, she would go with a group of her girl friends to the 'Recreation Center for Service Men' on the 'Navy Pear'. She would sing and dance for the delighted crowd all night long. The girls would ride the Chicago elevated rail to and from the dances. The Recreation Center is where she met that good looking red head, John Koehler, from



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Fresno California. Before long they couldn't stay apart. John was in the Navy during WWII and maintained aircraft on support carriers in the Pacific. Mom kept the letters John wrote her from overseas.

During one of John's extended leaves they got married. Mom stated that her dad was not happy that she married a GUY FROM CALIFORNIA! In fact, Mom told a story of how her dad sported a shotgun to try to convince the couple not to marry. The trick didn't work and they married on 8 April 1945. Almost immediately, John got orders to Alameda Naval Air Base in California. So off they went.

John's family had moved to Oakland from Fresno to support the WWII war effort at the Oakland Ship Yard. Consequently, Mom stayed with John's family when John went out on maneuvers. They stayed there for only a short while before John obtained orders for San Diego, where John was discharged from the Navy in 1946. John found an aircraft mechanic job back in the bay area at Alameda Naval Air Rework Base.

They initially moved to Castro Valley in 1946 bought a home and joined Faith Lutheran on Red Wood road. Mom immediately joined the church choir. She later found a Square Dancing Club, which reluctant dad joined her. Glenn came along in 1947 then Lynn in 1948. In the early 50's the family was forced to give up their Castro Valley property in support of a new freeway right-of-way. They consequently moved into a brand new home on Yale Ave in San Lorenzo California. Mom paid \$5,000.00 for a three bedroom single bath and single car garage home. Because of the relocation, the church in Castro Valley became a burden. Therefore, Mom and dad found a new church called St. James Lutheran Church located in San Leandro.

As it turned out St. James was looking for an office administrator. Mom applied for the position and was hired. Mom took this responsibility to the ultimate. She single handedly became the woman in charge at the church. She not only became the church secretary, she took over as the one and only all-around administrator that included the Sunday door greeter (she knew everyone in church), the wedding coordinator, the funeral coordinator, the house call director, the hospital visitation coordinator, established some of the woman's organizations and to top it all off she sang in the choir. Mom relished the social aspect of this position, but then there were the home family responsibilities also to take care of.



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Dad loved camping and took reluctant mom and us boys out into the woods frequently. Mom was a city girl growing up in the middle of Chicago and tolerated the camping trips. She would have rather gone dancing than camping. Dad loved getting down and dirty and dragged not only into the woods with a tent trailer and only a gas stove (using white gas); and of course, in those years, no mosquito repellent and who needs a lantern. Lynn loved nature and would surprise mom occasionally with live reptiles.

Then Dad placed both the boys in Cub Scouts then on to Boy Scouts, and of course Mom supported the scouting efforts and became an active leader. Dad was working overtime at the Naval Air Rework Facility in support of the Korean War effort, which took away time from supporting family activities. By the 60's the boys were in high school. Glenn graduated high school in 1965 then Lynn in 1966 and accordingly they left the family unit to accomplish their own American dream.

Camping in the 70's; Dad finally relented to mom's complaints of buggggggs and the intrusion of other strange critters and bought a 25 foot hard side camping trailer with air conditioning. With these modern conveniences, Mom finally fell in love with camping. But she didn't like going camping alone and convinced dad to join a Camping Club. Within a couple of years they graduated to a Recreational Vehicle. Social Mom took over the leadership of the Camping Club. She planned monthly camping trips into California's back country and of course organized the cooking and physical activities of each camping trip.

The 70's quickly transitioned into the 80's, Mom realized that her sons had families of their own and were loaded down doing their own thing. When dad decided to retire Mom joined him within a few years. Mom quickly got impatient with retired life. Accomplishing crafts and other mundane things didn't satisfy Mom. She couldn't sit still; she wanted to do grander things with her retired life.

Mom decided to join a tour company and organize tour trips. Mom's numerous contacts made organizing trips really easy. Initially, the trips were local; to casinos and short trips to local museums or to the Red Woods. But as time went along, she was able to organize grander trips within the United States then on to Europe. These tour trips became her ambition and soon she was able to organize monthly trips to unique places of interest throughout the 80's and 90's. An of course mom kept up the monthly RV trips and the Square Dancing activities.



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The late 90d's and early 2000's finally caught up with mom. Dad's health was degrading and Mom just couldn't maintain the initiative to organize tours. This life condition was disappointing to her, but it didn't negate her spirit. She took up crafts again and sold them at the church's swap meets and to her friends. She would walk to church taking Dad with her. Mom and dad kept up with their daily exercise classes given at the local church about half a block away. Eventually, dad had to stop driving because of his macular degeneration, so mom took on the load of maintaining the home and driving. Fortunately, Lynn and I were in driving distance of Mom and Dad's home so we took turns looking in on them.

Dad passed away on 31 March 2014. Mom was so irritated with the Lords decision. She wanted to join Dad immediately. However, mom relented by keeping up her spirit and joining in on any family dinners, outings, gymnastic and sports events, church events and visitations of her familiar friends. At 89 years young Mom decided to remodel her home. At 91 she stopped driving her car. At 93 she decided to sale her home (that she owned since 1964) and moved into Lynn's home. She lived with Lynn for a little more than 2 years.

July 2020 the entire family got together for weekend retreat in Tahoe. Mom turned 95 in February and was looking forward to this gathering. This was a big event and it included all of Glenn's and Lynn's children and their grand children. The entire family had a great time interfacing with each other. The good time included Mom playing with her children, grand children and great grand children. On Sunday afternoon I found Mom sitting alone on a bench in the woods. Mom looked and acted different. She talked in circles and couldn't walk without assistance. I thought that Mom was just tired.

Monday morning we packed our things and piled in the car for the trip home. Glenn took Mom to his home in Ramona so Lynn's family could continue their vacation.

Something was different with Mom; she was not social and slept almost the entire way home. When we arrived home Mom collapsed and Glenn had to call 911 to get her to the hospital. Visiting Mom at the hospital was horrible; even though the body was healing her mind wasn't. It was like her social life ended with the family gathering. From that point on Mom stopped walking on her own and dementia took over. We finally had to move Mom into a nursing home. Mom would have some good days visiting with family while in the nursing home. But as the days went on Mom required more and more care.



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The nursing home organized Mom's 98th birthday party (22 February 2023) with family in attendance. Even though Mom socialized with all attendees; after the birthday party ended Mom became less and less active until passing at 11:58 am on the 2nd of April 2023.



Events

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Funeral Service



Friday, April 28, 2023

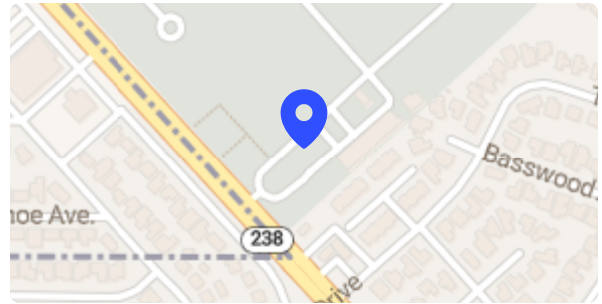


12:00 PM - 1:30 PM PT



Chapel of the Chimes Reflection Chapel

32992 Mission Blvd., Hayward CA 94544





Tribute Wall

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CK

Craig Koehler sent an Enchanted Cottage to the Koehler family.



April 26 at 6:41 PM

MK

Maureen Koehler posted:

My favorite memory of Grandma KOr Gigi is when she taught our family how to make her famous chili sauce. We went to her house on Maud and she showed us every step to make her wonderful sauce. And we made sooo much that day. It was a wonderful moment.I always loved going to Grandma and Grandpa K's house. Their back yard was a welcoming place where Athena loved to play in the flowers and Haven helped grandma in the kitchen. Grandma was always fond of my mom Janis and loved having conversations with her.I will never forget the fun family gatherings they hosted especially the crab feeds in February and celebrating her birthday. Grandma loved to crochet and I loved that we shared the joy of hand crafts together.I will miss you so much Gigi. Your vibrant soul, charismatic personality and joy of life will resonate within our family for so many years to come. Thank you for everything you have given to us, every laugh, every smile and every hug.Love you always, Maureen "Mo"

April 25 at 8:21 PM

MA

Matthew posted:

Oh, there are so many...Two that come to mind are (1) when, as a little boy I figured out how she got the egg inside her meatloaf to be perfectly egg-shaped when it didn't have any shell on it when you cut a slice of the meatloaf. When the epiphany happened and I said to her "Oh, you must put them in after you hard boil them, huh?" she laughed so hard she had to take her glasses off to wipe away tears. I'll never forget that... :)(2) When we were young, us grandchildren refused to go to sleep if GG was over until she came in and sang us a few songs. She was the songbird of the family and I will miss hearing her voice and seeing her face.Okay, one more... I remember the day you welcomed Maureen, Athena and Haven into your kitchen to pass on your techniques and family secrets to make your father's chili sauce. These moments are important, and cherished. :)It's sad that you're gone, but I'm so grateful we all had so many wonderful years with that beautiful soul of hers.Rest in peace grandma. We're all going to be okay, and I'll see you on the other side! Oh, and tell Grandpa I use his tools all the time. They still work great!Love you,Matt

April 22 at 8:26 AM



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Chapel Of The Chimes shared 3 photos to the **Photos shared with love by the family of Margaret G. Koehler** album.

April 21 at 10:35 AM





Chapel Of The Chimes shared 3 photos to the **Photos shared with love by the family of Margaret G. Koehler** album.

April 21 at 10:35 AM





Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Margaret by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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