



Joanne M. Hess

OCT 12, 1931 - NOV 4, 2013



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Joanne M. Hess

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Joanne M. Hess, age 82 of Rehoboth Beach, DE passed away on Monday, November 4, 2013, daughter of late John B. and Elizabeth (Sperry) Hess.

Recent health problems may have slowed her walk, but Joanne Hess was quick on her feet and was an active and ubiquitous presence in the Rehoboth Beach community.

Born in San Francisco - she was a fifth-generation Californian - Hess spent most of her professional life in Washington, D.C. working at National Geographic for 41 years, retiring in 2002 as director of audio/visual.

Originally hired for \$2,800, she worked up the ladder at National Geographic to eventually be in charge of the travelogue lecture program.

Her job at National Geographic allowed her the chance to travel and work with many of the prominent scientists and explorers of the 1970s, such as Jane Goodall, Dian Fossey and the Leakey family.

After her retirement, Hess made the move to Rehoboth full-time and became a staunch advocate for the preservation of the city's unique character. She was appointed to the planning commission in 2005, serving until 2008 when health problems forced her to resign. She thoroughly enjoyed her time on the commission.

A former member of the planning commission, Hess was a fixture at city commissioners meetings and helped every Tuesday with the Rehoboth Beach Farmers Market. A kind, grandmotherly-type, Hess was also something of a trendsetter, having bought the first lot in Country Club Estates in 1967. She built her house there in 1970 where she resided with her miniature dachshund, Hobo Too.



Obituary

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Since its founding in 2007, Hess was active with the farmers market, helping coordinate volunteers and work the information tent.

Hess managed to stay active politically, attending city meetings and providing resources and support to candidates she supported. Every year before election time, Hess mixed political activism with her other love: dogs. Since 2005, Hess had commissioned specially made dog leashes with the name of the candidate she supported, as well as creating an ad, paid for by "Hobo Too and His Friends," showing different dogs wearing the leashes.

Hess said her political activism goes back to her college days when she always made a point of attending lectures.

Hobo Too was Hess's fifth dachshund, named of course for her adopted city of Rehoboth. The first Hobo lived to age 18.

Besides a love of dachshunds, Hess also inherited a chair from her grandfather, which was used on the set of the movie "Gone With The Wind" and which Hobo Too, just like her grandfather's dachshunds, had adopted as his personal chair.

Ms. Hess is survived by her brother, Jonathan Hess of Washington, DC.; her niece Susan Y. Hess of Denver, CO; her great-nephew, Jonathan Vigil of Denver, CO; and her sister-in-law, Chong Sun Hess of Port Orchard, WA.

Funeral Service will be held at 11:00 AM on Tuesday, November 12, 2013 at All Saints Episcopal Church, 18 Olive Avenue, Rehoboth Beach, DE, where friends may visit one hour prior to service. Graveside Service will be held at 2:00 PM at the Epworth Methodist Cemetery, Henlopen Avenue, Rehoboth Beach, DE.

Memorial contributions in Ms. Hess's name may be made to SPCA, 22918 DuPont Boulevard, Georgetown, DE 19947.

Please sign Ms. Hess's guestbook located on this site.

PDF Printable Version



Tribute Wall

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TA

Tamie posted:

I knew her through her brother and much phone calls. What a beautiful patriotic soul

December 23 at 12:03 AM

MT

Marie Taylor posted:

Will miss my sweet, gentle friend who was always so kind and generous to myself and my family during the 14 years we knew you. Marie, Jim and Garry Taylor

November 11 at 8:00 PM

AW

Ann M. Womack posted:

My heartfelt sympathy to the Hess family. Joanne was a wonderful person, always giving of her time and energy to support her many causes. I came to know Joanne while she was a member of the Rehoboth Beach Planning Commission to which she was a valuable asset, and later the Farmers' Market. Joanne was a lovely lady. She ill be missed very much.

November 11 at 8:00 PM

KM

Katherine Mihok posted:

I was at Bryn Mawr College with Joanne in the early '50s. We were friends who sadly lost communication in later years. It has been wonderful to read of her industrious, productive, innovative community life in Rehoboth. I praise her life and memory. She is a great loss, but obviously her contribution lives on.

November 11 at 8:00 PM

JL

Jon Larimore posted:

I know the Greatest Of All Lecturers has reserved a front row seat for you, Miss Hess. May you take an honored place among the many greats who are already there and waiting to welcome you.gxja

November 9 at 8:00 PM



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CZ

Carl Ziebe posted:

May God receive you and bless your family. You hired me and that led to a fabulous career at NGS, for that I thank you.

November 8 at 8:00 PM

EF

Evelyn & Bob Fleegal posted:

She put the Lecture/AV Department on the masthead! I am grateful I could contribute. Joanne gave her all to NGS and I was glad I was there to do a small part. She was one of a kind!

November 8 at 8:00 PM

PL

Pat Long posted:

joanne you will be missed rest in peace pat and bill

November 7 at 8:00 PM

RP

Richard Pettigrew posted:

Our families have known each other for over 70 years. I was born in San Francisco a year before you. Our fathers went to high school together in Utah. So sorry to hear of your recent illness and passing.

November 7 at 8:00 PM

MW

Margaret Tulloch-Weir posted:

I enjoyed working with Miss Hess at the National Geographic Society. She was a true blessing to me. Miss Hess was very kind and always asked how my children were doing in school. My son Maurice was special to her. Miss Hess, may your soul rest in peace. Lovingly, Margaret Tulloch-Weir and family.

November 7 at 8:00 PM

BM

Barbara Moffet posted:

Condolences to the family of Miss Hess! I worked with her planning press conferences for many years here at National Geographic. Barbara Moffet

November 7 at 8:00 PM



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RA

Ron Altemus posted:

Rest in peace, Miss Hess.

November 7 at 8:00 PM

SL

Sue Lytton posted:

My heart is very sad at reading this news. I worked very closely with her for many years at National Geographic. The 'Chief', as we knew her. I was young & she helped to mold my career at NGS. She was as big as life. She will be missed.

November 7 at 8:00 PM

JP

Jenny Talton-Proulx posted:

Miss Hess was my boss at National Geographic for 10 yrs and we stayed in touch even after I moved to Oregon. She taught me much and I'm sad that I won't be able to pick up the phone and talk to her.

November 7 at 8:00 PM

DK

Don Kelly posted:

Joanne was a marvel. Always giving her time, energy and professional skills to support her many causes. I knew her through the RB Farmers' Market to which she was a tremendous contributor. Joanne will be very much missed and was a great lady.

November 7 at 8:00 PM

DM

Dottie/Myrna posted:

We will miss Joanne very much. She was so accomplished yet so humble and gave so much to Rehoboth. We were lucky to have known her.

November 6 at 8:00 PM



Memories only last if you share them

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



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