



Joan C. Meltzer

JAN 2, 1935 - MAR 1, 2026



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Joan Carolee Meltzer of Lewes, Delaware (formerly Sparta, New Jersey) passed away peacefully at home on March 1, 2026, with her family by her side. She was born on January 2, 1935, in Floral Park, New York, to the late Archie and Ida Stoddard.

Joan lived a life defined by warmth, curiosity, and a deep commitment to family and community. In her early years, she worked as an international flight attendant for Pan Am World Airways, an experience that reflected her lifelong love of travel and adventure. Later in life, after raising her family, Joan returned to college and earned a degree in English from Rutgers University. She went on to teach English Literature at Sussex County Community College. Joan devoted many years to public service as the Director of the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) at Norwescap, where she built the program from the ground up, helping countless volunteers find meaningful ways to give back to their communities.

Joan had a vibrant personality and a natural gift for bringing people together. She loved entertaining family and friends in her home, where laughter, conversation, and good food were always in abundance. Her legendary “Thursday Before Christmas” gatherings—affectionately known as the “Martini Parties”—became a cherished tradition for many. Joan delighted in raising a glass, often pausing to offer a heartfelt toast of gratitude to her beloved husband Michael, a gesture that captured the deep love and partnership they shared for almost 50 years.

She loved staying active and enjoyed skiing, biking, going to the gym, and even playing a little golf. She had a philanthropic spirit, enjoyed discussing current events, and never turned down the chance to travel.

More than anything, Joan was the heart and center of her family. She welcomed friends and loved ones with open arms and created a home filled with warmth, generosity, and celebration. She enjoyed making her famous spinach lasagna and pairing it with a wonderful red wine—moments that perfectly reflected Joan’s greatest joy: bringing people together around the table.



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Joan was predeceased by her parents, Archie and Ida Stoddard, and her sister Audrey Domanoski. She is survived by her devoted husband Michael; her loving children Christopher (Marian) Pappe, Michelle Pappe, Alison Stoddard, Melissa (Hank) Cardarelli, and William Meltzer; and her cherished grandchildren Brittany Stoddard, Benjamin Stoddard, Luciana Cardarelli, and Alessia Cardarelli, along with many extended family members and dear friends.

Joan's life was defined by generosity, laughter, and the simple but powerful act of bringing people together. Her warmth filled every room she entered, and her love will continue to live on in the family, friendships, and traditions she leaves behind.

If you wish to honor Joan, gather the people you love, raise a glass, share a meal, and offer a toast to family. In doing so, you will be celebrating life in the very spirit she cherished most.

Celebrations of Joan's life will be announced at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made in Joan's name to the Alzheimer's Association Make A Donation | Alzheimer's Association or Delaware Hospice Give - General Form - Delaware Hospice

Please sign the tribute wall located on this website.



Tribute Wall

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B

Brittany Stoddard shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.

Christmas in New Jersey with the train choo-chooing around the tree, playing the pickle game, and helping grandma in the kitchen with her famous rib recipe that she passed down to me.

April 25 at 1:25 PM





Brittany Stoddard shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.

April 25 at 1:25 PM





Memories only last if you share them

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



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