



# Joanne Lou Hein

MAY 29, 1930 - FEB 12, 2024



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## **Joanne Lou Hein**

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**J**oanne Lou Hein, Jo, age 93, went to be with the Lord in heaven on February 12, 2024, in Muskegon, MI, under hospice care at The Village at the Oaks. She was born on May 29, 1930, in Kalamazoo, MI, to Howard and Frances (Wagner) Bresson. Jo graduated from Kalamazoo Central High School and went for one year to Western Michigan University, then transferred to Hillsdale College, where she became the president of her sorority, Kappa Kappa Gamma. On May 5, 1951, Jo married her high school sweetheart, Jerry Hein.

Jo discovered her love for the outdoors and water when she attended Girl Scout camp at Camp Merrie Woode and later became a lifeguard and waterfront director there. She went on to lead and choreograph synchronized swimming at Hillsdale College where she was awarded Women's Athlete of the Year. Jo was a finalist at the National Synchronized Swimming Championship. After college she was hired by Lone Star Brewery in Texas to produce their water show. Her love for the sport continued throughout her life with water shows at Kalamazoo Country Club, Jolly Roger Swim Club in Grand Rapids, and Grand Haven YMCA. She performed her last ballet leg at the age of 92.

Jo was known for her love of music. From a young age, she sang with her sister and aunt in the Bresson Trio in the style of the Andrew Sisters of the 40's. The trio sang at Central High and once for German prisoners of war at a camp near Battle Creek. She was a music major in college; always immersed in music and singing. As a young mother, she was involved in the organization of the first Festival of the Arts in Grand Rapids. She organized and directed the musical "If My People" held in Grand Haven. She led children's choirs in Grand Rapids at Shawnee Park CRC and in Grand Haven at 2nd CRC. If she wasn't directing, she was singing with her autoharp at weddings, funerals, and banquets.

Jo had a passion for children throughout her entire life, including teaching second grade at Kalamazoo Christian School, where she was awarded Teacher of the Year. Jo also enjoyed sailing with her husband and family, windsurfing (taken up in her 50's), gardening, baking fantastically



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creative birthday cakes for her children and grandchildren, cross-country skiing, knitting, cross-stitching, and sewing.

Jo is survived by her loving husband of 72 years, Jerry Hein; children Mark (Fiona) Hein, Julie Anne Ely, and Molly (Joe) Bishop; grand-children, Nicholas (Brie) Hein, Derek Hein, Laura Elizabeth (Jeffrey) Fuller, Zeke Bishop and Montana Bishop and one great-grandchild, Kensington Hein. She is preceded in death by her sister, Marilyn Saville. The family will celebrate her life at a later date with a private service. Arrangements are by the Lee Chapel of Sytsema Funeral and Cremation Services, 6291 S. Harvey St., Muskegon, MI 49444. Please sign the family's online guestbook and share memories with the family at [sytsemafh.com](http://sytsemafh.com)



## Tribute Wall

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**Sandi Degroot** posted:

A beautiful woman who was a positive influence in my life. I will always be grateful for Jo & Jerry, who were my youth group leaders in high school. Many hours were spent in their warm & welcoming home. I have no doubt that she was welcomed into heaven with open arms. My thoughts & prayers are with your dear family Sandi (Poel) DeGroot

February 16 at 6:07 AM



## **Memories only last if you share them**

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



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