



Joanne Petit

December 5, 1934 - July 14, 2021

Joanne Petit was born Johanna Katinka Geier on December 5, 1934 in Bergen, Germany. She grew up in Frankfurt, Germany and excelled as a student all the way through business school, speaking 3 languages by the time she was a teenager. Johanna was affectionately known as Hannelore by family and friends in Germany. Despite the hardships, darkness and sorrows through WWII, Hannelore was a determined, hardworking, persevering and outgoing woman who was admired by so many. She met Bob Petit when he served as an officer in the OSS (precursor to the CIA) in Germany. They fell deeply in love, married in Germany and moved to Indianapolis, Indiana in 1953 where Hannelore changed her name to Joanne. The couple had 3 children; Rob, Michele and Claudia in Indianapolis where Bob worked for the National Hardware Association. Joanne was active in the German Club, organized numerous business and neighborhood social events and spent much time with extended Petit family members around Indianapolis. When Bob took an executive position with the Paint and Wallpaper Association, later named the National Decorating Products Association, in St. Louis, Missouri, Joanne took on a much greater role in co-hosting events, traveling to numerous trade shows, opening their home to countless executives who came to town and keeping up with neighborhood social events and children's activities from pet shows to scouting to band practices in the basement. The Petit home was a revolving door of visitors and friends, just as Joanne and Bob liked it. Joanne also became a top performing real estate agent, ultimately opening her own brokerage with a team of agents serving numerous repeat clients who enjoyed her tremendous attention to serving them well. Joanne and Bob spent most weekends and holidays at their wonderful cabin at Peaceful Valley Lake in Owensville, Mo. where multiple family reunions and gatherings took place. Joanne loved to fish and taught the seemingly unteachable to enjoy it too! The Petit lake house was a special place where Joanne treated guests to countless meals of fried fish caught right in the lake. Once retired, the Petits moved to Atlanta to join their 3 adult children and their families. The Petits continued their legacy of entertaining and bringing people together for any reason, great or small. Family was everything to the Petits and they never missed a milestone event unless there was no choice. All loved Joanne and Bob, including the many animals in their lives. Joanne was known as an "animal whisperer" as she could

coax an alligator, sand cranes, raccoons, opossums, geese and their numerous family dogs to do anything. She was fearless and kind with animals. Joanne was always game for good fun and everyone joined in with just a little encouragement from her.

Joanne left a piece of her heart in Germany, especially with her beloved sister Emmi (Wolfgang) and brother, Herbert (Anne), cousin, Lothar (Heidi), and all of their great children. She so loved when her mother Elisabeth (Irwin) and Emmi and Wolfgang and kids visited the states. Joanne traveled to Germany repeatedly, as well, with the last visit being 2018. She loved traveling through Europe and acquainting fellow travelers, young and old, with its beauty and different cultures. Hal and Ruth Ann Petit joined Bob and Joanne on numerous trips and both couples spent many winters in South Florida where Bob and Joanne always welcomed visiting friends and family.

Joanne is survived by Emmi (Wolfgang) Huhne and Herbert (Anne) Geier and their families, Joanne's children Rob Petit, Michele (Kirk) Sarkisian, Claudia (Ken) Gerber as well as grandchildren Anna Sarkisian, Beau (Chelsea) Petit, James Sarkisian, Kenny (Alexa) Gerber, Callia Petit, Elyssa Gerber, Aubrey Gerber and great grandchildren Brooklyn, Bela, River and Lincoln. She had a special place in her heart for niece Debbie (Denny) Jordan and Steve (Carrie) Roach along with their families. The extended Petit family and so many friends and family shared in Joanne's full and adventurous life, as well. Joanne was sent with great love and affection directly into the arms of Jesus on July 14, 2021 and is in perfect peace and joy with those who went before her. A celebration of life will take place at a later date when close gatherings, which she so enjoyed, are easier for all.

Tribute Wall

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“ *What a beautiful message about Joanne’s life! An amazing woman! Blessed to read of her long, impactful life. Praising God she is with Jesus. Deepest sympathy to all her family and friends as you adjust to the now without her here with you. Warm regards, Kathy and Allan Bogardus*

Kathy Bogardus - August 01, 2021 at 07:29 AM