



JoAnn Lee (Blackwell) Bridge

August 3, 1931 - November 21, 2025

JoAnn Lee (Blackwell) Bridge, born August 3, 1931, in Hugo, Oklahoma, went home to be with the Lord on November 21, 2025, after a long and courageous battle with Alzheimer's disease. She was the beloved daughter of Edward Levi Blackwell and Marie (Deffeyes) Blackwell. Raised on the family farm, JoAnn spent her early years in Oklahoma before moving to Bradley Beach, New Jersey, at age 12.

JoAnn graduated from Asbury Park High School, where she met and fell in love with her high school sweetheart, Richard Joseph Bridge. They married on December 24, 1950, beginning a lifelong partnership rooted in faith, love, and family. After two years of college, JoAnn paused her studies to focus on raising their family and supporting Richard as he served in student churches, attended college, and seminary. Together, they welcomed six children over the next eight years: four girls and twin boys.

Throughout her life, JoAnn found joy in teaching Sunday School to teens and young adults, leading handcrafts at Vacation Bible School, and creating Chalk Talk illustrations alongside Richard's singing at church programs. A talented seamstress, JoAnn crafted wool suits, matching dresses for her daughters, and, eventually, wedding gowns. She masterfully managed the demands of a busy household, supervising her children's homework while preparing family dinners. JoAnn ensured the family made cherished memories every summer through camping trips or visits to extended family in Florida.

JoAnn returned to her studies after her children were in grade school, earning

a bachelor's degree in art education in 1969 from Glassboro State College. She went on to teach junior high art and also worked for an advertising firm near Princeton.

In June 1993, JoAnn and Richard retired to Portsville, Delaware. From the dock along a stream behind their red brick ranch, they enjoyed canoeing, sailing, and biking together. JoAnn's love for gardening, bird watching, and family gatherings continued, and her organizational talents made for many memorable family gatherings.

As Alzheimer's disease progressed, JoAnn's family came together to support her. She and Richard moved into a two-room apartment built on her daughter Connie's (and Willie's) property, where Connie, along with the help and support of her husband Willie and sister Mary Jo, lovingly cared for her. The rest of the family visited and helped as they were able. JoAnn's spirits brightened with the simple joys of a bowl of ice cream or the delightful visits from her great-great-grandchildren (babies). Her daughter Alice remembered a morning in February 2020, during a visit from Colorado, when JoAnn, increasingly confused and her legs beginning to fail her, lifted her voice in prayer: "Lord, wake me up where I belong. Plant my feet on solid ground." Six children survive JoAnn: Teresa Bridge Jackson, Alice (Marvin) Crawford, Connie (William) Villegas, Mary Jo (Donna) Bridge, Richard M. Bridge, and Edward (Kirsti Kaldro) Bridge. JoAnn was preceded in death by her beloved husband, Richard Joseph Bridge, on September 23, 2021. She leaves a legacy of love through her 16 grandchildren, many great-grandchildren, five great-great-grandchildren, and numerous nieces, nephews, and friends. She will be deeply missed as the cherished matriarch of a large, loving family. Her six children agree that she was the BEST MOM IN THE WORLD.

JoAnn's celebration of life service will be held on Monday, December 29, 2025 at 11:00 am at Woodland United Methodist Church in Seaford, DE.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

DEC **29**. 11:00 AM (ET)

Woodland United Methodist Church
5123 Woodland Church Road
Seaford, DE 19973

Tribute Wall

RJ

“ On behalf of friends and colleagues in ARMS (Association of Retired Ministers and Spouses), we extend our deepest sympathy to you all, JoAnn's loving family. There is comfort in knowing she is fondly remembered by so many. In our hearts memories remain to inspire us, to enrich us, and to remind us of the beauty we have shared with someone so special.

Rev. Bob and Linda Scott

Robert and Linda Scott Jr - November 26, 2025 at 05:00 PM