

Obituary for Jo Ann Rye Rodriguez



Jo Ann Jones, loving mother and grandmother, passed from this life into eternal life on Friday, July 10, 2020. She is survived by her three children and their spouses: Ricardo Rodriguez, Jr. married to Janice Ward Rodriguez, Michael Rodriguez, Sr., and Anjeanette Rodriguez married to James Lawrence. She also left behind seven grandchildren and their spouses: Ricardo Rodriguez, III, Felicia Rodriguez Seal married to James Seal, Nikolas Rodriguez married to Kati Rodriguez, Michael Rodriguez, Jr. married to Adaiah Rodriguez, Raven Lawrence, Majestic Lawrence, and McKenzie Lawrence. Her great grandchildren are Elizabeth Rodriguez, Christopher Rodriguez, Ricc Rodriguez, Sebastian Trevino, Destiny Garza, Marissa Garza, Joseph "J.D." Garza, Zoe Freitag, Madison Freitag, and Asher Freitag. Along with these, she also leaves behind many other loved ones to include her siblings, Dora Etta Rye Miller and Joel Rye, a great aunt, Evelyn Hampton Stepherson, her many nieces and nephews, and many cousins.

Born Jo Ann Rye on May 15, 1936, in Dardanelle, Arkansas, she was the eldest of the siblings. She discovered a piano in a neighbor's apartment at a tender age of 4 or 5, and taught herself to play the instrument by ear. This would lead to many hours of piano playing throughout the years, and Jo Ann led worship in many churches, as well. Jo Ann loved to play sports and always claimed to be very athletic. The family has photos of her shot putt and basketball teams from High School.

Jo Ann married Ricardo Rodriguez, Sr. on May 10, 1958 in the state of Mississippi, and they raised their family together in North Little Rock, Arkansas and then in San Antonio, Texas until 1975. During this time, Jo Ann became a surrogate mother of sorts. She offered a home and cared for her young brother,

and soon took in his son, Jo Rye, raising the baby alongside her two sons, Ricardo and Michael. After a divorce, Jo Ann was called back to her hometown state by her father, Joe Rye, to help take care of her dying mother, Thelma Hampton Rye. Jo Ann and Anjeanette would spend the next 14 years in Arkansas. On September 24, 1994 she married Ronald Jones, taking in his son, Ramon Jones, as her own. Jo Ann took care of her sister and helped to care for her sister's son, Todd Edwards, as well. Jo Ann made her way as the matriarch of the family, by being a leader and provider, and by taking in any of the family members if help was needed.

Jo Ann met every struggle with strength and resolve. She always made a way for her children and her siblings and their children. She creatively found ways to make money to include bake sales, and crafts. She also made a lot of her own clothes and really understood how to stretch a penny. She poured herself into work and provided excellent care for her family, often with little help from others.

Jo Ann made many friends in the church community. She taught Sunday School, played piano, sang worship, led prayer groups and was also a Cell Group Leader in her home. She touched many lives with her sense of humor, ease of sharing love, and willingness to be of help. Along the way, Jo Ann took in her children's friends and became a loving role model to many.

Jo Ann spent the last year and a half living at Town & Country Nursing and Rehabilitation in Boerne, Texas. There she spent countless hours coloring in her books of pictures, attending community activities, making crafts, playing many games, baking cookies, and playing the piano. She was adored within this community of new friends and caregivers.

Jo Ann's legacy of love has been evident in the lives of her family members. She taught each one how much they deserved love, always expressed love generously, and broke barriers with her ability to accept others just as they are. Her hugs were warm, her smiles were genuine, and her love was always her greatest gift. No one could walk away from Jo Ann feeling unwanted. She had a way of making anyone feel special.

Jo Ann will be dearly missed by her family and loved ones. She will live on in our hearts, and she will never be forgotten.

-Lovingly written by daughter, Anjeanette Lawrence

