



Jean Johnson Ranstrom

May 10, 1938 - October 12, 2023

Jean Marie Ranstrom was born May 10, 1938 on a farm near Forest River, ND to Harold and Angela (Maszk) Valinski. (Jean was born a twin and her mother liked to share the story that they were charged \$25 instead of \$20 because there were 2 babies). She lived on the family farm until 1942, then moved to Grand Forks, ND. She graduated from Central High School. She attended and graduated from Mayville State Teachers college in 1957. Jean taught 3rd grade in Hillsboro, ND before marrying Don Johnson in 1958. Jean and Don started their married life in the Twin Cities and then moved back to Larimore, ND in where they owned and operated a funeral home for 8 years. They moved to Grand Forks, ND to run a group home and had 17 foster children. They finally settled on a small farm outside of Alvarado, MN to raise their 5 children. Don and Jean divorced in 1982.

Jean married Fraye Ranstrom in 1986 and they raised goats on a farm outside Alvarado, Minnesota before retiring to White Bear Lake, MN. They tried retirement life in Green Valley, Arizona and Alexandria, Minnesota but Jean always kept busy with her art. Upon the passing of her husband, Fraye, Jean moved to Bloomington, MN to be closer to her children.

Many people that met Jean remembered her through her art. Jean had a lifelong passion for painting. She grew her art career from a hobby, to part-time job and, eventually, a full time career. She was an award winning artist

and held signature status in the Pastel Society of America. She is remembered for her landscapes and still lifes in oils and pastels. Jean taught painting beginning in 1971 and caught the bug to help other people discover their talents. Jean was the ever encourager and teacher. While she painted and sold 1000's of paintings, she can remember the unique titles she gave to each of them and who bought them. She was co-owner of Avalon Arts in White Bear Lake, MN and sole owner of her studios in Alvarado and Alexandria, MN. She continued to teach classes and hold workshops for nearly 50 years.

In addition, Jean was generous with her time. She spent countless hours volunteering through church, providing farm goods for those in need, and by donating art for worthy causes.

Jean is preceded in death by her parents, Harry and Angela Valinski; grandparents, Ben and Cecilia Maszk and Anton and Elizabeth Narlock; brother Hal Valinski, her husband Fraye Ranstrom; and step-son Peter Ranstrom.

Jean is survived by her twin sister, Betty Gust of San Jose, CA; children, Paul Johnson of Snohomish, Washington, Brett (Marie) of Milan, Michigan, Troy Johnson, of Hawaii, Dirk Johnson of Milan, Michigan, and Kathleen (Douglas) Graber of Apple Valley, MN; step-children; Christine (Bob) Belkowski of Newport News, Virginia, Kari Deaton of Las Vegas, Nevada, John (Stephanie) of Mahtomedi, Minnesota, and Paul Ranstrom of Henderson, Nevada; Daughter-in-law, Cathy Ranstrom of Las Vegas, Nevada; 19 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren.

A Celebration of Life Service will be held on October 30, 2023 from 1pm-3pm at Summerhouse in Bloomington, MN. Address is: 9850 Lyndale Ave So. Brief service will start at 1pm with social time to follow.

Tribute Wall

GE

“ I met Jean in Tubac, Arizona and she was so delightful. What a beautiful soul and what an artist. I learned so much from her. She said follow your dream and remain true to yourself. I person who brought life yo everyone she met. Love you.

germaine - May 23, 2024 at 03:55 PM

LQ

“ Jean was an amazing art teacher - she brought out my passion to paint that I had been harboring for years - I will miss our conversations - she had a genuine interest in my life and I loved her for that.



Linda Quamme - November 02, 2023 at 11:25 PM

PC

“ A delightful blessing, an air of life whenever in the presence of your company, a gifted friendship, and lovingly beautiful inside and out. Thank you for sharing her life with me as I am honored to have had moments and time with Jean.

Paulette Christianson - October 20, 2023 at 01:02 PM

PM

“ My sympathy to all of Jean's family. She was a joy to visit with every time I saw her. I will treasure the painting I have of hers even more.

Peggy Maulding - October 20, 2023 at 11:38 AM

LI

“ *I’m so sorry to hear of Jean’s passing. She was my mentor and teacher over the past 10 years and I will miss her greatly. She had a bundle of energy and the most positive attitude of anyone I have met. It is a loss for all.* ”

Linda - October 20, 2023 at 10:22 AM