



Joan Elaine Akana

November 12, 1931 - April 30, 2021

Joan Elaine Akana "Jo" passed away at her Yreka home surrounded by her family on April 30, 2021. Born November 12, 1931 to Raymond and Dorothy Luce, she was a Scott Valley gal known for her feisty and caring nature. She had a passion for her family and friends, the outdoors, and animals with a special fondness for horses. She enjoyed sharing stories of taking the cows to the Marble Mountains during the summer and gave vivid depictions of mountain wildlife and sleeping under the stars.

Joan attended college in Sacramento where she was terribly homesick. Her roommate Judy Akana told her; "You've got to meet my cousin Ralph". Joan and Ralph hit it off and after finishing college they were married in August of 1953. They worked in Sacramento until Ralph was drafted into the Army and served in the Korean War which moved the couple to Fort Bragg. In 1955 they were transferred to Fort Richardson, Alaska where their first child was born. She enjoyed the great Alaskan outdoors, but shared that "Ralph just froze" so upon his honorable discharge in 1956 they returned to Sacramento where Ralph's teaching job was waiting for him.

A teaching job opened up in 1962 at Yreka High School and the growing family returned to Joan's Northern California roots where they raised their 4 children. Beginning in the fall of 1978 Mrs. Akana worked as a Teacher's Aide at Gold Street School for Mrs. Washington's 1st grade class until her

retirement in 1995. Following retirement she joined the Trail Riders and the Back Country Horsemen groups with a commitment to keeping the trails open. She also worked for her good friends at the Kleaver Pack Station where "Jo" was in her absolute glory riding in the Marble Mountains on her "good ole mountain horse", Rooster.

Joan was a founding member and volunteered at the Stable Hands Riding Center where she graciously spent hours grooming, tacking, and leading horses. She further served her community as a member and supporter of the Siskiyou Historical Society. She shared her good cooking, cheerful home, and open heart with family, friends, and neighbors. Her positive attitude, joyful spirit, and generosity was known throughout the county.

Joan was preceded in death by her father Raymond and mother Dorothy Luce, and Ralph, her husband of 64 years. She is survived by her sons Randy (Bette), Tim (Tracey), daughter Kim Sumner (Scott), and son Eric (Suzanne); grandchildren Nina, Cody (Olivia), Kai (Robyn), Kealia, Kolten (LaTosha), Nick Sumner(Ashley), Eric Sumner, Jacob and Joshua; great grandchildren Mason, Hayes, Maya, Kalani, Keanu, Reed Sumner, Matt and Mahlia.

In accordance with her wishes no services will be held. Memorial contributions can be made to Madrone Hospice, 255 Collier Circle, Yreka Ca 96097, or a charity of one's choice.

Tribute Wall



“ 1 file added to the album Obituary Wall



Girdner Funeral Chapel - April 27 at 04:07 PM

BY

“ RIP Joan and happy trails.....🥹

Bob Young - June 18, 2021 at 12:00 AM

JO

“ I am so sorry...remember your mom and all her hard work and dedication to Stable Hands and the love she had for the kids, and us volunteers too. Was privileged to have known her.

Jennie L Onarheim - May 20, 2021 at 12:00 AM

MC

“ Deepest Sympathy

Mark and Sherry Crawford - May 19, 2021 at 12:00 AM

DT

“ The world has lost a wonderful , special lady. JO was a dear friend, loving mother and raised a remarkable family. She will be missed so much. Love and prayers to the family. 💕

Donna Tobiasson - May 18, 2021 at 12:00 AM

CL

“ *In memory of my friend, Jo Akana*

Claudia - May 11, 2021 at 12:00 AM

BS

“ *Jo was the most wonderful person! She and Ralph were almost the first people we met when we moved here almost 49 years ago. Ralph and Dave taught together and often fished together, and Jo took me under her wing when i got my first horse. She would come into town with her trailer and pick up me and my green young horse and take us to various things, mountains trails, horse clinics, shows, she was kind and generous with her knowledge and love of the animals and nature. She was incredibly capable in these endeavors, from packing to grooming to fixing flats on some twisty mountain road with truck and horse trailer...wonder woman. She will be greatly missed by many and we send our condolences to all the family whom we have known through the years. Betsey and David Shuteroff*

Betsey & David Shuteroff - May 10, 2021 at 12:00 AM

MF

“ *So sorry to hear. Joann was such a sweetheart. Thoughts and prayers to the family. ❤️😭*

Mary Frederick - May 07, 2021 at 12:00 AM

FB

“ *What a beautiful couple they were! We always had the respect for them and as their children came along our admiration extended to the whole family! Just GOOD people and neighbors....the kind this world needs more of! God be with you all as you go through this time of great loss. You will be in our prayers Tom and Flo Barnes*

Flo Barnes - May 07, 2021 at 12:00 AM

KN

“ RIP. So sorry for your loss. 🙏🙏🙏🙏

Kristen Naylor - May 07, 2021 at 12:00 AM

LR

“ I'm here for you all. ❤️ I miss her. 😞

Lorry Rivera - May 07, 2021 at 12:00 AM

SS

“ So sorry about your Mom. She was always one of my favorite people. We grew up on the backs of our horses riding in the Valley. More than once my horse let his reins on your grandparents front fence and headed for the island without me. She will definitely be missed. Sharon Holmes Sanborn.

Sharon Holmes Sanborn - May 07, 2021 at 12:00 AM

SS

“ Joan was a great friend to a horse crazy ten year old. Many wonderful memories. Happy trails. Synthea Tibbs Smith

Synthea Smith - May 07, 2021 at 12:00 AM

CF

“ Cinda Folsom lit a candle in memory of Joan Elaine Akana




Cinda Folsom - May 06, 2021 at 12:00 AM

DD

“ *I'm so sorry for your loss she was a friendly woman and I'll miss her.*

Deni Duncan - May 06, 2021 at 12:00 AM

CM

“ *So sorry for your loss. My thoughts and prayers are with all of you.*


Cheryl Miller - May 06, 2021 at 12:00 AM

EJ

“ *She was an amazing person. She was a aide to all of our girls at gold street school. Our girls loved her so much. We got a kitty from her and they use to call it the Akana kitty. She also packed up all the mules so Dick and his friends could go back into the Marble Mountains. We are sending prayer out to the entire family. We will miss her.*

Ellen Lowell Janson - May 06, 2021 at 12:00 AM

MH

“ *What an absolute peach of a lady, loved her smile and laugh* 😊

Maggie Harris - May 06, 2021 at 12:00 AM

CF

“ *Such fond memories of Jo. A true cowgirl, friend, mother, grandmother and wife. Her laugh was infectious and boy was she a terrific cook. Lots of memories of summers Jo spent with our family taking our cattle into the Marble Mountains . She will be dearly missed.*

Cinda Folsom - May 06, 2021 at 12:00 AM

KH

“ So very sorry, my thoughts are with the family. She was such a kind and sweet lady. 😭

Kathy Hagedorn - May 06, 2021 at 12:00 AM

TJ

“ Jo was one of a kind. I will miss her so much. I believe she is riding horses with my mom and dad. Sending hugs to all the Akana family.

Tracy Justice - May 06, 2021 at 12:00 AM

ES

“ My condolences to all her family!!!

Elizabeth Stewart - May 06, 2021 at 12:00 AM

DS

“ An amazing lady with a huge heart and an incredible work ethic. Ralph and Joann were a big part of so many of our lives growing up and will always hold a special place in our hearts.

Dave Seeley - May 06, 2021 at 12:00 AM

LH

“ A beautiful woman, her joyful voice carried caring words, laughter and love!

My prayers and condolences go to the family and all that knew her!



Liz Hockaday - May 06, 2021 at 12:00 AM