



## Marijo Sullivan

May 26, 1944 - November 17, 2020

On November 17, 2020, Marijo won her 32-year battle and is walking and dancing in Heaven. She was an inspiration to everyone who knew her with her tenacity, courage and determination never losing her faith and hope.

Marijo was born in Butte, Montana to Patrick and Romana O'Leary in 1944. She graduated from Girl's Central Catholic High School in Butte, Montana where she met her husband, Joe Sullivan. She graduated from Great Falls School of Nursing with an RN degree. Marijo married Joe Sullivan in 1967 in Montana. They moved to Boston, Massachusetts after they were married where she was a nurse. In 1969, they moved to Kennewick, Washington where Joe accepted a teaching job and they have resided there ever since. During this time, she spent many years raising a family and practicing her profession with caring and compassionate dedication as a nurse for the Kennewick School District. Her passion was for migrant school children and she was their advocate beyond her job. She enjoyed being a part of her children's sports and activities as well as getting together with her multitude of local friends for social events. In October of 1988, Marijo suffered a massive brain hemorrhage that left her in a wheelchair and in the care of Joe and many caregivers for the rest of her life. Over the 32 years she was in a wheelchair she worked tirelessly to live life to the fullest. She was a loving and loyal daughter, wife, mother, sister, and friend. Her countless friends continued to reach out to her for social events and her interests continued. She was always willing to give advice, encouragement and support and rendered her medical advice with, "I am a Nurse." Marijo enjoyed time with her family and her grandkids.

Marijo is survived by her husband Joe Sullivan, her three children: Patrick Sullivan (wife Robin) of Benton City, Washington; Joelle Sumner (husband Craig) of Kennewick, Washington; and Dawn Connor (husband Trent) of Vancouver, Washington, two sisters: Patty Higinbotham of Butte, Montana and Rosalie O'Leary (husband Steve Steve) of Seattle, Washington, and four grandchildren: Sophia Sumner, Mitch Sumner, Miles Sumner, and Quinn Connor and numerous niece and nephews.

Marijo is preceded in death by her parents Patrick and Romana O'Leary and her brother-in-law Harlan Higinbotham.

Funeral services will be held at St. Joseph's Church Kennewick, Washington in a private ceremony. Arrangements are by Mueller's Tri-Cities Funeral Homes.

# Comments

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“ Dear Joe and family, I was so sorry to hear of Marijo's passing. I remember what a good friend she was during our high school days at Butte Central High School. With your permission, I would like to have a Memory Mass said for her at St. Patrick's Church. God Bless all of you. Sandi Skender

**Sandi Skender** - December 01, 2020 at 02:17 PM

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“ To Marijo's family I want to say I am so sorry for your loss. I was lucky to have worked with her. She shared her enthusiasm as she came into the classrooms to teach our students how to brush their teeth and other healthy lessons. The students were delighted to see her and the "friends" she'd bring along to help teach the lessons. May God reward you for helping us.

**Cecilia Guillen** - November 30, 2020 at 01:21 AM

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“ We wish to say to MARIJO that we know you are walking now and have fired that wheel chair. You were our support system when we moved to Kennewick. Joe was your fantastic and funny groom that was there in whatever role until the end. Your cleverness, artistry, and generosity was not matched by anyone. I remember learning how to make curtains for my daughters bedroom and picking you as her godmother. Please continue to look after all of us still. Your strength and determination will live on in your grandchildren. We loved you very much. Donetta and Tom.



**Donetta and Tom** - November 22, 2020 at 09:00 PM

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“ I wish to send my heartfelt condolences to Marijo's family. My story about her revolves around her sister, Rosie. We were college roommates, both of us Irish Catholic girls, she from Butte, me from Billings, MT, attending MSU. We've lost contact w/each other over the years...1969 to now. Upon being invited to the O'Leary home on a weekend, Rosie & Marijo's Mom asked me if I would like to borrow Marijo's wedding dress for my wedding in 1970? She was sure it would fit perfect. She was right & I accepted! Rosie was asked to be my maid of honor but she accepted a job out of state & had to decline. I'll never forget that visit to the Butte home OR sleeping in the freezing "attic" bedroom OR their loving parents OR being best friends with Rosie in college. My Irish immigrant grandparents met & married in Butte, so I felt this kinship with Rosie. The fact that my husband & I just moved back to WA & I saw Marijo's obituary today in the paper...well, it's just incredible. Thank you, Marijo, for being such a sweet daughter & sister! If you see this post, Rosie, please email me at [mkdissel@gmail.com](mailto:mkdissel@gmail.com). Hugs to you, Mary Kay

**Mary kay dissel** - November 22, 2020 at 06:48 PM

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“ Joe, you and your family are in my prayers. It was fun to share lunch times at Canyon View with Marijo and other staff members. I fondly remember her telling the story of how time consuming it was to make ravioli for the family only to have it eaten so quickly. She solved the problem by having a family ravioli making Saturday and there were ravioli left to put into the freezer. Marijo was a lovely, happy person who impacted many people. She will be sorely missed.  
Carol Hattemer

**Carol Hattemer** - November 22, 2020 at 04:37 PM



“ Beautiful Marijo, inside and out. Now another direct line to our Heavenly Father!  
Dan and Gloria Ahern

**Gloria Ahern** - November 23, 2020 at 04:04 PM



“ My condolence Mr Sullivan to you and all your family I'm so sorry to hear about Mary Jo I have beautiful memories of her and I working together for the KSD. We had so much fun doing the migrant physicals to all of our Migrant kids whom she loved very much and care for them. She was greatly miss after she couldn't work. I know she is in heaven with her loved ones. May she rest in peace

**Betty RIVAS Guizar** - November 24, 2020 at 09:41 AM

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“ My heartfelt condolences to Joe and family. Mari Jo enriched the lives of so many children through her encouragement and love. I was privileged to work with her in the KSD Migrant Program when it first got started, We shared so many laughs and my treasured little wood plaque she presented to me upon her trip to Italy in 1981 adorns my home office wall. We were so blessed to have her in our lives. Prayers to all the family and friends. She will always be remembered!

**Jo Cluck** - November 21, 2020 at 04:42 PM



“ Our love and prayers are with all of the family. Maryjo will be missed but our thoughts, when we heard of her passing were that she is rid of the wheelchair and the limitations that put her in it. I loved teaming with her to do students hearing and vision. She was always so happy and fun to work with. She didn't worry about herself but would bring her Mom to Westgate to have me check her B/P . Some times Maryjo would come into the building so we could visit but usually some else would bring her Mom in. Prayerfully Jim and AJ Foster.

**jim and aj FOSTER** - November 23, 2020 at 11:18 AM



“ I have fond memories going to high school with MaryJo. Some of us from the Butte flats would walk up to her house and she and her family were always hospitable to us. Her kindness and loving ways were so appreciated. Remember seeing her at our 30th class reunion and her positive attitude even though she was in a Power Chair. May she Rest In Peace. Marylyn Klesh

**marylyn klesh** - November 27, 2020 at 02:16 PM



“ Dear Joe and Family..... We were so sorry to hear that your dear, Marijo, had passed away. Words at this time cannot express your loss..... and pain, but please know that you and your family are in our thoughts and prayers. Please accept our sincere condolences. God bless to you, Joe, and your children and their families. Bob and JoAnn Roach. Great Falls, MT

**Robert Roach** - December 02, 2020 at 08:11 PM