



Thelma "Jan" Janis Roehr

August 19, 1931 - July 15, 2015

"Let your heart burn with loving-kindness for all who may cross your path."

Jan Roehr was born Thelma Janis Bulls, August 19, 1931 in Clarendon, Texas. Jan and her younger brother, "Sonny" adapted to the family's frequent transfers throughout Texas and Oklahoma. Their father, Bransford Franklin Bulls was District Superintendent for Cabot Corporation. Their mother, Kezzia Studebaker Bulls, was a teacher.

Jan graduated from Guymon High, attended Cottey College for one year and then went on to earn her BA in English Literature from Texas Tech in 1953. She was working as the Regional Girl Scout Director for the Panhandle of Texas and Oklahoma, when she met Arthur Leonard Roehr, the handsomest, sweetest, most pure-hearted man she would ever know.

She married Art and lived on his farm near Liberal, Kansas, until the twins, Stephen Bransford and Stephanie Kay, were born. They moved back to Texas to be nearer family and Art went to work in the oil fields. Their third child, Sharon Leigh was born one year and 2 weeks after the twins.

A transfer to the Rocky Mountains sent them first to Glenrock, Wyoming where Jan's career as a teacher began. She taught middle school and was awarded Young Educator of the Year in 1965. By the time the family moved to Powell, Wyoming, Jan had earned her Master's Degree from the University of Wyoming. Her thesis explored 19th Century African-American literature, a field little researched at that time.

She became the Head of the Powell High School English Department and

taught 20th Century Literature, Creative Writing, 11th and 12 grade English and was the speech and debate coach as well as the sponsor for the literary magazine she created, "The Muse". She kept after the all-male school board until they amended school district policy to allow female teachers and students to wear pants to school. "Mrs. Roehr" was adored by her students and was especially appreciated by the many parents whose sons she helped apply for and earn college scholarships instead of one way tickets to Vietnam. She was one of those teachers people remember all of their lives. Former student, Dirk Cozzens, tracked her down 35 years after he graduated and wrote to her in 2010, "I want to thank you for what a good teacher you were and what a positive influence you had not only on me, but I'm sure on so many students. You made us feel like we had something to offer the world and that if we put forth some effort we could make our dreams come about. So thank you from the bottom of my heart."

During their years in Wyoming, the family spent weekends and vacations fishing the lakes, hunting game, and exploring pioneer sites and ghost towns. Jan enjoyed collecting jade, arrowheads and purple tinted bottles.

In 1974, Amoco transferred Art to Aurora, Colorado where Jan became Executive Director of Virginia Neal Blue, a non-profit overseen by the Colorado Commission on the Status of Women. More than 51% of the heads of the household in Colorado were women. She traveled the state seeking and developing training and employment opportunities for women in non-traditional, well-paying jobs as welders, in the mines and on Colorado's highways. When funding stopped a decade later, she didn't. She started Occupational Options Inc., training young adults in entrepreneurship and helping women in Colorado's rural communities to market and sell their traditional embroidery crafts. Additionally she sought out Master Hispanic weavers to train these women, enabling them to earn their living with art that reflected their cultural heritage. Many of these pieces are now in the Smithsonian.

Art and Jan enjoyed their summers on Shadow Mountain Lake and their

grandchildren fondly remember fireworks seen from the boat, hiking the nearby mountains, fishing for rainbow trout and attending classes at Estes National Park where Jan volunteered as a docent.

They retired to Lake Palestine, close to family in Tyler, TX, where Jan was active as a Master Gardener, in Newcomer's, Tyler 21 Bridge Club, Bible Study Fellowship, and Presbyterian Women's Circle. She was always ready to get up and go, whether it be singing on a Mediterranean Tour with the Voices of Baha, exploring the Inside Passage of Alaska with Art's brothers, Jack and Charles and their wives, Barbara and Patty, or attending reunions with the Bulls Boys and the Roehr Kids all over the country.

When Art died on March 16th of this year, they had been married more than 60 years. It was just too hard without him. Jan died on July 15, 2015.

Jan and Art are survived by their children, Stephen and Blanche Roehr, Stephanie Eijsink-Roehr MD and Han Eijsink, and Sharon and Fred Cline, 10 grandchildren and 9 great grandchildren, as well as adored in-laws and outlaws, nieces, nephews and cousins, and cherished life-long friends. She will be remembered by all for her rabble-rousing, open heart and friendliness, keen intelligence, sharp memory and wit, her indomitable curiosity and her rich sense of humor.

Graveside services will be held on Saturday, July 25, 2015 at 9:00 AM at Hawthorne Cemetery, off FM 2661 on Lake Palestine, followed by a memorial service and reception at 10:30 AM at First Presbyterian Church in Tyler with Rev. Dr. Stuart Baskin officiating, under the direction of Stewart Family Funeral Home.

Cemetery Details

Hawthorne Cemetery

FM 2661, CR 1194
Noonday, TX

Previous Events

Graveside Serv.

JUL 25. 9:00 AM (CT)

Hawthorne Cemetery
FM 2661, CR 1194
Noonday, TX

Mem. Service

JUL 25. 10:30 AM (CT)

First Presbyterian Church
230 Rusk St.
Tyler, TX 75701

Reception following service at the Courts Community Room, 2001 E. Jackson Rd

JUL 25. 11:00 AM (CT)

First Presbyterian Church
230 Rusk St.
Tyler, TX 75701

Tribute Wall



“ I haven't known Jan long , as we just moved to the lake 3 years ago, but I felt an immediate kinship to her. She had the gift to put you at ease and you felt like you'd known her forever. She was such a beautiful woman, both inside and out. I will miss her. Bob and I are lifting the family up in prayer. Jan Viglini

Jan Viglini - July 22, 2015 at 04:35 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Thelma "Jan" Janis Roehr.



July 21, 2015 at 06:01 PM