



Josephine A. (Rizzo) Spano

February 8, 1924 - November 7, 2020

Josephine Ann (Rizzo) Spano, 96, passed away on Saturday, November 7, 2020 in New Berlin, WI.

A longtime resident of Beloit, Josie was born February 8, 1924 in the little Sicilian village of Graniti to the late Peter and Nancy Rizzo. Josie lived a rich and fulfilling life that spanned the Great Depression, WWII, the Civil Rights Movement, and other historical highlights that characterized the times related to “The Greatest Generation” of which she was certainly one of the meekest, yet greatest. Josie had a happy childhood living in Beloit after a short time in Chicago. She passed through Ellis Island at the age of 2, with her mother, to be reunited with her father who was a WWII U.S. Army veteran. She graduated from Beloit High School and married her high school sweetheart, John, on July 25, 1942. Soon, a war bride, she traversed the country twice by train to be with her husband in California before he shipped out for two years in the Philippines.

A cheerful and friendly woman always, she worked at a plumbing company, a fireworks factory, and at Fairbanks Morse in the credit union as a cashier. She also worked in the laundry facility at Camp Roberts, California, while John was in training there before he soldiered in the Pacific Front.

Josie was a wonderful homemaker and member of a number of clubs, such as the Lega Muta, Philharmonica, and St. Paul’s Altar Society. Forever a devoted daughter, wife, mother and friend, Josie gave of herself to all her family and kept their home running so well. And even though she always said she was “just a housewife,” she was so much more to everyone she knew. Her door was always open in her neighborly, generous way. When her beloved John died, leaving her a widow at age 44; she steadfastly took care of her younger daughter, Linda and supported her parents in every way in their home until their deaths.

Josie was a true Christian-Catholic without bias or judgement, who had a knack for making people smile and feel good about themselves with her grace, kindness and humor. She was an inspiration to all who knew her by name or merely by sight as they recognized a pure soul.

She leaves behind her two daughters, Linda Spano and Patty (Alan) Kobus; grandson, John Kobus; brother-in-law, Jim Spano; nephew, John Spano; and cousins in the Beloit,

Australia and Italy.

She was predeceased by husband, John; mother and father, Nancy and Peter Rizzo.

Josie will be missed more than words can ever express, and will be remembered always as the best example of decency and love that can exist in this world.

Funeral Mass of Christian Burial will be at 1:00 p.m. Thursday, November 12, 2020 in St. Thomas Catholic Church, 824 E. Grand Avenue, Beloit, WI. Burial will be in Calvary Cemetery. Visitation of remembrance will be from 11:45 a.m. until 12:45 p.m. Thursday in the church. Social distancing and face mask are required.

Cemetery Details

Calvary Cemetery

Colley Road
Beloit, WI

Previous Events

Visitation

NOV 12. 11:45 AM - 12:45 PM (CT)

St. Thomas Catholic Church
824 E. Grand Avenue
Beloit, WI 53511

Service

NOV 12. 1:00 PM (CT)

St. Thomas Catholic Church
824 E. Grand Avenue
Beloit, WI 53511

Tribute Wall

SM

“ *To Dearest Patty and All the Family.
We send our deepest sympathy, prayers and love in memory of Josephine. Our visit to see her was a blessing for the family in Australia and to be able to share her life at the time is a very special memory we will always cherish. Jesus Have Mercy On Us.*



Sylvia Melita-Hall - November 14, 2020 at 08:53 PM

JM

“ *TO PATTY AND LINDA,
SO SORRY FOR THE LOSS OF YOUR MOTHER, SHE WAS A FRIEND OF
THE MARINO FAMILY FOR MANY YEARS.
SINCERELY, JAN MARINO MARY TARTAGLIAS SISTER-IN-LAW*

JAN MARINO - November 14, 2020 at 09:36 AM

DH

“ *1 file added to the tribute wall*



Daley Murphy Wisch Funeral Home - November 12, 2020 at 05:45 PM

LF

“ *Dear Patty and Family, I am so sorry for your loss. Sending prayers to you.*

Lori Francis - November 12, 2020 at 10:04 AM

PK

“ My Grandmother was a loving, friendly and compassionate woman who was giving and welcoming to friends and family. Her kindness was shown with a wonderful meal shared around her kitchen table or with a note and prayer card sent in the mail to know I was in her thoughts. She gave me honest advice when I needed it and it was always hopeful and encouraging. I was fortunate to have her in my life and will miss her very much.

John A. Kobus

Patty Kobus - November 11, 2020 at 09:50 PM

SV

“ Josie was such a dear sweet friend. She and Linda made Susie and me feel like part of the neighborhood when we moved to Beloit as their Bushnell backyard neighbors nearly 20 years ago. I especially loved hanging out in Josie's kitchen, while chatting with her about "old Beloit" and learning about her interesting life history. She always left me feeling better after our conversations, thanks to her warmth and gentle spirit. Josie truly was a terrific representative of the "Greatest Generation", and she will be deeply missed by so many people.

Steve Vavrus

Steve Vavrus - November 11, 2020 at 09:39 PM

PK

“ Dear Patty and Linda, I am sorry to hear of your Mother's passing. I remember the great friendship your mother and my mother Catherine shared and the shared family meals we would have. You were very fortunate to have her so long in your lives. Prayers be with you.

Peter Keyes

Peter Keyes - November 10, 2020 at 07:39 PM

DG

“ Knowing Josie has been a real blessing in my life. Her warmth, sense of humor, and upbeat attitude cheered everyone and provided a good example for all of us. When asked how she was doing, she would always respond with, "I'm okay," no matter the circumstances of her life. She really appreciated any little remembrance and wrote thank-you letters long after such a tradition had passed. I will miss Josie and her heart-felt hugs. Thank you, Pat, for introducing us so many years ago.

Dianne Guckenberger

Dianne Guckenberger - November 10, 2020 at 04:56 PM

ES

“ Although I never had the opportunity to get to know Josie, I am getting to know her from the comments of those who did and from talking to Pat. Everyone who knew her describes her as a caring and generous person. I feel she was also a strong person who was able to handle all the phases of her life. Her life exemplifies all that is important to a life well lived.



Our condolences for your loss.

Elen Sahar

Elen Sahar - November 10, 2020 at 12:01 PM

 Pete Wanner

“ Dear Linda and family, When I think of our Beloit neighborhood, I think of Jo and Linda walking the block. Jo was always so welcoming and a delight to visit with. What a lovely tribute to her in this obit and memories. Eternal rest and joy be hers now! Fondly, Pete and Tom Wanner

Pete Wanner - November 10, 2020 at 10:33 AM

AR

“ Patty and family, So sorry to see your Mother's passing. It is always hard to loose our mothers, but we can have our memories always in our hearts. Prayers with you all. Anne Flanigan Rhoades

Anne Rhoades - November 09, 2020 at 10:42 PM

GR

“ Josephine was a wonderful person. She was always generous to those in need and helped anyone she could. She was forever cheerful and never complained. My husband and I always enjoyed chatting with her. My deepest condolences to Linda and the whole family. Gretchen Roy, Beloit

gretchen roy - November 09, 2020 at 04:06 PM

EB

“ I doubt this incredible lady ever met anyone who didn't want to immediately become her friend. That's just the kind of person Josie was.

Eileen Bartelt - November 09, 2020 at 01:38 PM

MM

“ we are really sad hearing that Josie passed away. We are really close to you in heart and spirit, Josie will ever be in our memories.

The Melita's from Rome, Italy

Mario Melita - November 09, 2020 at 12:50 PM

JS

“ *Patty, my introduction to Josie was when she was being courted by my brother, John, in the early 40's. She was warm and had welcoming smile for me. Through the years, our families celebrated many holidays with Rizzo family and in the later years with Josie as host. Whenever she knew I was in town to visit, she always made sure that was a chocolate cake on the table for me. Always welcoming and thoughtful of others was her trademark. She will be welcomed in heaven by John and her parents and smiling at St. Peter.*

Love and prayers.

Jim Spano

James Spano - November 09, 2020 at 11:40 AM

LJ

“ *Dear Pat, Al and John, Josie was a wonderful example of "the Greatest Generation." Her passing leaves a big void here. Thank you, Pat, for letting me know her through you, who are a fine woman and friend, a living testimony to Josie's strong character and joyful spirit. You and your family are in our prayers. We feel the loss.*

Loris and Phil Jacobs

Loris Jacobs - November 09, 2020 at 11:12 AM



“ *What a lovely lady and such a worthwhile life! Prayers and best wishes to your family.*

The Blum Family

Teresa Hinds - November 09, 2020 at 09:22 AM

DM

“ *Diane Mitchell lit a candle in memory of Josephine A. (Rizzo) Spano*



Diane Mitchell - November 08, 2020 at 08:06 PM

DM

“ *Patty, Al, Johnny and Linda, we send our deepest sympathy to you, your family and all friends of Josie. I know she had many! I spent so much time at your house growing up and your mom never failed to ask me how I was & remembered what I talked to her about last time. She was a beautiful soul, modest, humble, sweet and caring. Heaven has gained another Angel! With much love and many prayers, Diane and Doug*

Diane Mitchell - November 08, 2020 at 08:05 PM

DF

“ *Sorry to hear of Josephine's passing. Many great memories as a child of visits through the years. She has gone home to the Lord & her love will be with us here always.*

I pray for your peace during this difficult time & send my love and spirit though I cannot be there in person.

*God bless always with love,
Dan*

Dan j Francis - November 08, 2020 at 06:32 PM

LB

“ *Patty, and family, so sorry for you loss. Sending Sympathy and Prayers.
Lois Buroker*

Lois Buroker - November 08, 2020 at 05:56 PM

AV

“ *A beautiful, heartfelt tribute to a fine lady. I am truly sorry we cannot attend the gathering, but our hearts will be with you and the family. Mrs. Spano will always be a part of our happy memories as we have known her for almost 60 years and have always considered her part of our family. She will be missed, but I know she is smiling happily being reunited with her John and her mother and father. They met her with open arms.*

Anita and Duane Voiles - November 08, 2020 at 05:22 PM

AG

“ *Anita Gulotta-Connelly lit a candle in memory of Josephine A. (Rizzo) Spano*



Anita Gulotta-Connelly - November 08, 2020 at 05:14 PM

AG

“ *Patty: What a beautiful tribute to your mother!! Love and condolences to you, Linda and all your family. Anita Gulotta-Connelly*

Anita Gulotta-Connelly - November 08, 2020 at 05:13 PM