



Mary Ann Seeko

August 2, 1935 - September 17, 2024

Lafayette - Mary Ann Seeko, 89, of Lafayette, N.J., passed away on Tuesday, September 17, 2024, at the Karen Ann Quinlan Home for Hospice in Fredon, New Jersey. Her kindness, love, good humor and service to others will be remembered forever.

Born August 2, 1935, in Jersey City, N.J. to Stephen and Marguerite Florence (Heitmann) Thiesen, she grew up in Hoboken, N.J. Mary Ann was a precocious child. She loved books, played the piano, and studied opera. In 1952, she graduated from Demarest High School in Hoboken with honors at age 16. Shortly after graduating high school, she married Bernard Francis Seeko. They were married for 19 years, and had three children.

Mary Ann was predeceased by her son, Douglas Seeko, who died in 1959. She is survived by her loving companion of many years, Ralph Henderson and his children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren, and her two daughters, Diana Garrera and husband Joseph of McGaheysville, Virginia, and Dawn Babcock of Dingman's Ferry, Pennsylvania. Mary Ann was cherished by her grandchildren, Michael Lyons, Nicole Nixon, Joan Nixon, and Brett Babcock; and her great grandchildren, Rylan, Andrew, Caleb, Caroline and Catrina.

Mary Ann had worked as office manager for Bruce Edsall Insurance in

Franklin for many years before she obtained her license as a municipal clerk from Rutgers University. She then started her career in municipal government as the Township Clerk for Hardyston Township and retired in 2000 from Wantage Township after serving as the Township Clerk Administrator for 12 years. Besides her enjoyment while working with the public, Mary Ann had a strong desire to obtain a college degree while performing her administrative role and received her Bachelor of Science Degree from Upsala College, graduating magna cum laude in 1994.

All during this busy time in her life, she was introduced to Rotary International. The Walkkill Valley Rotary Club bestowed a high honor on Mary Ann many years ago when they invited her to become the first woman Rotarian in Sussex County history. Later she became the club's first woman president. She also was active at the district level, serving terms as District Secretary and Assistant Governor. In 2013, she celebrated 25 years of Rotary membership, and was presented with the coveted Paul Harris Fellow Pin, an achievement she embraced with honor and solemn pride. Being a Rotarian was one of the great joys of her life and many members and visitors of this singing Rotary Club will remember her as the club's pianist throughout her membership.

A life-long learner, Mary Ann had remarkably eclectic interests and hobbies. In her early years, she was an active member in the Bloomingdale United Methodist Church, where she taught Sunday School, sang in the choir, and was the junior choir director. Later, her interests broadened.

After moving from Bloomingdale to Hardyston Township in 1965, her family purchased a 15-acre horse farm on Big Spring Road. It was there that she and her family enjoyed developing their equestrian skills with several horses. Their favorite horse was named Domino and he became a family pet along with their family dog, named Didan, who was a shepherd collie mix that Mary

Ann spent countless hours training.

Mary Ann's love of horses was only one of her pursuits, and it introduced her to the world of 4-H where she and her long-time companion, Ralph Henderson, started a local chapter, "The Stirrups and Spurs." They loved the camaraderie with families and friends they interacted with through the club. Teaching children was one of her many enjoyments; she enjoyed volunteering with Project Literacy, which led to her spear heading the "Dictionary Project" within her Rotary Club. She was also an accomplished square dancer, and was a member of Country Cousins Square Dancing Club with Ralph for many years.

With a predilection for water and swimming, Mary Ann enjoyed years of pool parties and memorable get-togethers with close friends.

Along with swimming, Mary Ann enjoyed SCUBA diving and snorkeling, and earned her certification as a trained SCUBA diver. Over the years, she traveled to Jamaica, Bonaire, Bermuda, and Hawaii , where she and friends dove in some of the most pristine waters in the world.

High on her bucket list was a yearning to see the world. After her retirement, she traveled with her daughter, Diana. Together, the two toured Russia and the Mediterranean. She visited Germany, Italy, and Switzerland, and created life-long memories.

Mary Ann always enjoyed visiting with neighbors and friends, chatting and catching up. She had an extended family that included artist, Barbara Hornstra and many others who were life-long friends. She remained close to her Kindergarten friend, Joan Terry. Her greatest passion was her family, relishing birthday parties, holiday get-togethers and always made her time to visit loved ones.

In a short biographical sketch of her life, Mary Ann advised her family and friends to “Please live your life to the fullest because it ends too soon. Be as good as you are, as I write this. May your blessings be many.”

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made in memory of Mary Ann Seeko to Wallkill Valley Rotary Club, P.O. Box 819, Sussex, NJ 07461 or Karen Ann Quinlan Memorial Foundation, 99 Sparta Avenue, Newton, NJ 07860

Friends may pay their respects to the family on Monday, September 23, 2024 from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at the Pinkel Funeral Home, 31 Bank Street (Route 23), Sussex. Funeral services will be held directly after the visitation at 11:30 a.m. at the funeral home with interment to immediately follow at Crest Haven Memorial Park, 750 Passaic Avenue, Clifton, New Jersey. Online condolences may be offered to the family at www.pinkelfuneralhome.com

Cemetery Details

Crest Haven Memorial Park

750 Passaic Avenue
Clifton, NJ 07012

Previous Events

Visitation

SEP **23**. 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM (ET)

Pinkel Funeral Home, Inc.
31 Bank Street (Route 23)
Sussex, NJ 07461
(973) 875-3272
alexis@pinkelfuneralhome.com
<https://www.pinkelfuneralhome.com/>

Service

SEP **23**. 11:30 AM (ET)

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Tribute Wall

PH

“*Mary Ann will be greatly missed. She was a woman of many interests. I remember the 4-H days with her riding my horse Squire. She taught me a great deal while riding. God be with you and with Ralph and your family during this difficult time. Peg Hughes*

Peggy Hughes - September 21, 2024 at 03:57 PM



“*I was so sad to learn of Mary Ann's passing. She was such a special lady and always a pleasure to talk to at Rotary meetings. She lived such a interesting life and had so many stories to tell, and she told them like she was reliving the moment, with a twinkle in her eye . She will be missed.*

Ellen Likos Smith - September 19, 2024 at 05:00 PM

VW

My family and I will sure miss Maryann. She was always enthusiastic and encouraging. As my step mother she always enjoyed hearing my successes in life and watching our family grow . One memory that comes to mind is when her granddaughter Ashley was getting the retired teachers association scholarship . She was so proud to go with us and see Ashley awarded that scholarship. She always enjoyed hearing Ashley's achievements. Later she shared occasions such as Ashley's wedding to Ryan and years later , the birth of Nico . Maryann was so happy to hear Bob and I got to our life long dream of retiring and moving to our Florida home . We enjoyed every Sunday morning phone calls followed by emails daily so she could enjoy our new home and sites of Florida.she will be missed. We loved her very much . So happy we told her that many times.

valarie woortman - September 19, 2024 at 07:21 PM

KQ

Mary Ann has been a very special part of our family for the past 50 plus years. She was loved and will be greatly missed. Our deepest condolences and prayers go out to Uncle Ralph, Dawn, Diana and family.

Kim Layton Quinn - September 19, 2024 at 09:15 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Mary Ann Seeko.*



September 19, 2024 at 04:08 PM

WC

“ *Wallkill Valley Rotary Club planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mary Ann Seeko.*

Wallkill Valley Rotary Club - September 19, 2024 at 04:08 PM