



Joy James Ozbirn

October 9, 1934 - November 11, 2021

Joy James Ozbirn died November 11, 2021 at 9:15 p.m. and joined her beloved husband, Charles, in their forever home, Heaven.

On October 9, 1934, in rural Arkansas, Samuel Harmon James and May Belle Craig James had their first and only child, Joy. While effects from the Great Depression and World War II made it a particularly difficult time to grow up, Joy's small, tightly knit family and community still recognized and nourished her intellectual curiosity and encouraged her to enroll at Arkansas State University in Jonesboro as a first generation college student.

College suited this petite, young woman, and she soon caught the eye of a tall, lanky man named Charles Ozbirn. The two married in 1953 and then began their teaching careers while still in college. After the birth of their first daughter, Susan, Charles and Joy moved to Memphis, TN so that he could pursue a career in business. Shortly after moving, they had a second daughter, Leslie, who completed their small family.

Desiring to complete her college education and continue her teaching career, Joy enrolled in Memphis State University and graduated with honors. She quickly obtained a teaching position as an English and history teacher and then later became a guidance counselor. She furthered her education gaining a Master of Education and then continued with her "plus 45." She retired from the education system as an assistant principal, and many students at Sheffield High School and Hillcrest High School benefited from her teaching, advice, guidance, and encouragement over more than thirty years of service.

While Joy enjoyed her career, she also had hobbies which included going to the theatre, symphony, volunteering in her community, and hosting parties. She shared her love for these things with

her grandchildren. As a consummate hostess, Joy and Charles's home and lake house were often filled with family and friends. In 1991, she retired and had more time to travel, volunteer, and enjoy her family. She volunteered countless hours with Methodist Hospice, Fox Meadows Elementary, and Asbury United Methodist to stay engaged with and serve her community.

In 2012 her first great-grandchild, Luke, was born. The second great-grandchild, Pete,

arrived on Valentine's Day 2015, and one day after what would have been Charles's 86th birthday, Isabella made her appearance on August 29, 2017. Joy was known as Gigi to her great-grandchildren. Gigi was grateful to have had the opportunity to get to know each of her great grandchildren well. She spent immeasurable hours baking, reading, and caring for them.

On November 4, 2021, after a long fight for her health, Joy made the decision to enter Methodist Hospice. She was at peace and ready to meet Christ. On November 11, 2021, Joy held her daughter's hand and took her last breath here and her first in Heaven. She is survived by: her daughters Susan Miller (Jim) and Leslie Sandifer; her granddaughter Whitney Miller; her grandsons Alex Miller (Amanda) and Ethan Sandifer (Deidre); her great grandchildren Luke, Pete, and Isabella; her nephews Phil Berry (Debbie) and Dennis Berry (Colleen) who lived with her for a while in their youth; her cousins Brenda Shirley and Sherry Berry, whom she considered as sisters; and a host of nieces, nephews, and friends who will remember her with a smile and think of her every time they eat a bowl of soup.

She was preceded in death by her parents, husband, and son-in-law, David Sandifer. Services will be at Collierville United Methodist Church in the Church on the Square Saturday, November 20, 2021. Visitation will be between 10:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Following the service at 11:00 a.m., the burial will take place at Memorial Park.

Cemetery

Memorial Park Cemetery

5668 Poplar Avenue

Memphis, TN, 38119

Events

NOV **Visitation** 10:00AM - 11:00AM

20

Collierville Church on the Square

Collierville, TN, US, 38017

NOV **Funeral Service** 11:00AM

20

Collierville Church on the Square

Collierville, TN, US, 38017

Comments



“ Please accept my deepest condolences during your bereavement. Remember, "Earth has no sorrow that heaven cannot heal." Mrs. Ozbirn was a serious, devoted, "no nonsense," professional educator with a tough exterior and a "heart of gold." One Saturday, I left a message for Mrs. Ozbirn requesting a substitute teacher because my mother was in the hospital and not expected to survive. Within thirty minutes, Mrs. Ozbirn was sitting with me in the hospital's waiting area. We are blessed for her having been a part of our lives.

"May the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord make His face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you. May the Lord lift His countenance upon you and give you peace." Numbers 6:24-26.

Love,

Sandra D. Sargent

Sandra D. Sargent - November 20, 2021 at 08:25 AM



“ Strength & Solace Spray was purchased for the family of Joy James Ozbirn.



November 17, 2021 at 03:42 PM