



Marilyn L. Chinnici

November 12, 1943 - September 2, 2023

Teacher, Community Volunteer, a Life of Giving

Dear Friend,

I'm not sure when I first met Marilyn Chinnici. She is not a person I saw often nor knew well, but she made a lasting impression. She was one of those people who was cloaked in a warmth that spread, because she was a devoted and caring listener.

Marilyn and I would normally have an annual phone call about membership. She was instantly engaging, asking how everyone was doing at "home," as she and her husband Joe spent recent years in Hilton Head. She would speak about Joe as if they were one, and her mentions of him always stood out in our exchange. Her love for Joe was paramount.

It is obvious that a lot of thought was put into the writing of her obituary. Her family captured her spirit well and I hope you will take the time to read about her life of giving. Our condolences to her family.

Sincerely,



Jane Morton Galetto
CU Maurice River Board President

Marilyn L. (Knudsen) Chinnici
1943-2023

Obituary -

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Marilyn L. (Knudsen) Chinnici, a cherished resident of Hilton Head, South Carolina and Pittsgrove, New Jersey, passed on September 2, 2023. Born on November 12, 1943, Marilyn was the youngest of four siblings, growing up on 4th Street in Vineland, NJ. She was a dedicated alumna of Sacred Heart Grammar and High School, graduating in 1961. She furthered her education, earning a double major in Speech Therapy and Dramatic Arts from Montclair State College in 1964, and a Masters in School Counseling from Rowan University in 1993.

Marilyn's life was graced by a deep and enduring love. At the tender age of 15, she met the love of her life, Joseph Chinnici, and in 1964, they joyfully entered into a lifelong marriage. For 35 years, Marilyn dedicated herself to public education, initially as a speech pathologist with Easter Seals, followed by dedicated service at Edgerton School, Aura School, and Delsea Regional High School. The final chapter of her professional career saw her serve as a school counselor with the Delsea Regional School District.

Marilyn possessed an unwavering commitment to giving and service. Her faith was a cornerstone of her life, and was an active member of Saint Isadore's parish in Vineland for many years. She generously volunteered as a eucharistic minister and directed and produced the St. Isidore's Passion Play alongside her partner, Joe, who served as Technical Director, for over two decades. Additionally, she was deeply involved in the CCD program at St. Isidore's parish. Marilyn and Joe's spiritual journey also led them to Saint Francis Church in Vineland, where they attended daily mass, and where she extended her volunteer efforts.

Marilyn's altruistic spirit shone through her ten-year involvement with the Pittsgrove Municipal Alliance for the Prevention of Substance Abuse (Pittsgrove MAPSA). Her dedication further extended to her volunteer work with the Vivid Art Gallery in Hilton Head, South Carolina, a venture benefiting the Michael J. Fox Research Foundation in its quest to find a cure for Parkinson's disease. Marilyn was also a longtime contributor to World Vision's impactful initiatives for children and women, a testament to her enduring love for her parents.

Art was one of Marilyn's true passions, with watercolors being her preferred medium. Her exquisite artwork adorns her homes and those of her children. She also possessed a

green thumb, taking immense joy in gardening and utilizing her harvest in her delectable cooking. Marilyn held a deep affection for the cherished traditions of crab feasts and cookie making, which she shared with those closest to her. An enthusiast of biking and dancing, she was an active member of the Hilton Head South Carolina Shag Club.

Marilyn's love for travel knew no bounds. She ventured across the entire East Coast, explored the beauty of California and the American Southwest, explored numerous European countries, crisscrossed every region in Italy, and ventured to Sicily three times. Her profound pride in her Italian and Norwegian heritage was unmistakable, and she made certain that her children, grandchildren, nieces, and nephews all felt a deep and enduring connection to their ancestral roots.

Above all, Marilyn relished her roles as a mother and grandmother. Her adoring affection extended to her cherished nieces and nephews, as well. Marilyn is survived by her devoted husband Joseph, her daughter Gabrielle Chinnici-Heyel, her son Christopher Chinnici, son-in-law David Heyel, her cherished grandchildren Matthew Heyel, Mariana Heyel, Cole Chinnici, and Kyle Chinnici, her brother Arthur Knudsen, sister-in-law Maryanne Knudsen, sister-in-law Dorothy Coleman, as well as her nieces, nephews, and precious friends who she loved so deeply. She is predeceased by her parents, Arthur and Rose Knudsen, her brother Eddie, her sister Joan, her father and mother-in-law, Anthony and Lillian Chinnici, and her sister-in-law Florence O'Hara.

Marilyn's life was a testament of immense love and genuine connections. She was not just an incredible counselor and advisor but also a compassionate listener to countless souls and instilled in us the gifts of faith and hope. As her beloved Joe put it, "she was our champion," and for anyone fortunate enough to cross her path, she was indeed their champion too. Our dear "Noni," your love will forever shine, transcending the boundaries of time and space, to the moon, the sun, the stars, and beyond. We will cherish you always, eternally and evermore.

For all those who cherished Marilyn, your grief is a journey without a fixed path, and always remember, in the words of Ram Dass, "we're all just walking each other home".

To honor Marilyn's memory and carry forward her spirit of giving and compassion, her family intends to make contributions in her name to her favorite charitable organizations. In lieu of flowers, we kindly invite all who wish to contribute to these donations to send them to Joseph Chinnici. Alternately, contributions to any charities in Marilyn's honor are also welcome.

A visitation to celebrate Marilyn's life will take place on Tuesday, September 12th, from 9:00 AM to 10:30 AM at Padgett Funeral Home, located at 1107 NJ-77, Bridgeton, NJ 08302. Following the visitation, a mass and internment will be conducted privately, for immediate family members.

CU ON THE RIVER

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