



Joanne Murphine

Mother, Wife, Teacher, Friend, Fisherman, Mentor to Children,
Animal Lover

April 29, 1939 – June 28, 2026

Dear Friend,

I am sorry to relay the news about the passing of member and Trustee Emeritus Joanne Murphine.

I've known Joanne for over 40 years. She was a friend, river neighbor, and a very active CU Maurice River member. She was a constant volunteer and I have much to share but it is only the tip of the iceberg, as she had many other community involvements...

Joanne had many gifts. She was a good listener and she listened to her community well. Above all else she was a people person.

She had the ability to go from a serious moment to a full-blown grin in a nanosecond. She had two distinctive smiles: one where her mouth was slightly open and her eyes were nearly shut, and the other in which she showed only her teeth and twinkling eyes. For me no matter which one she employed she looked a bit mischievous.

I don't have to tell you what Joanne thought – because *she* always did. The last time I spoke her she said, “You're not giving me a chance to speak.” And I suppose she was correct. And as I embark on sharing my memories about her I will only prove just how correct she was.

Whatever she did she was all in – especially if it involved kids, family, animals, or the river.

Joanne was warm-hearted, especially for her animals. I can still envision her taking her dachshund “Willy” (registered as: Wee Willy Weiner Dog) on the golf cart to Burcham's beach, or in her navy pickup truck with “Jeffrey,” a big slobbery Newfoundland, on a ride about town. The more he slobbered the more she laughed. She appreciated the juxtaposition of her favorite breeds of dogs. When Willy became heavier she would drop her jaw in a full-blown silent laugh at his predicament of being unable to get up on her bed. If I remember he had a step stool or ramp that she provided for him in later years.

Her daily golf cart ride to the river wasn't just a passing fancy. Riverside, Joanne made mental notes about everything. “Well, I either saw a shark or a dolphin.” “Those phragmites are taking over the river.” “I think that eagle is nesting at the end of the lane.”

In her 60s she still helped with riverside clean-ups. She could give the greatest worker a run for his money. Joanne could WORK.

She sized people up well and shared her impressions. These were never long-drawn-out explanations if she thought people were out of line. She often started with, “Well, I can tell you one thing: he only thinks of one person.” She'd raise her eyebrow, and that was enough.

“You know, I don't know what you think, but I think she's a bit strange.” No explanation, no driving the person into the ground – just a short proclamation.

She was more descriptive in her praise. “If you want to know something about plants, that guy knows his stuff.” Or, “She can ride a horse.” “Have you seen her art?” “Those young girls who moved to the river have the best manners; they are really polite. One wrote a really neat poem.” About fellow trustee Berwyn Kirby – “Berwyn and his brother could really tap dance. I don't mean like kids – they were professional!”

She took her civic responsibilities seriously and regularly watched City Commission meetings. Joanne freely told you what she thought about the proceedings. “Did you watch the City Commission meeting last night? It's really unbelievable. I think so-and-so is pretty good.” Or, “Hmmm, something is not right with that guy.”

She was proud of being a teacher and later of being a teacher's aide. She spoke of how the children so badly needed role models: not just hollow compliments, but true

guidance and earned praise. “So many of the kids aren’t getting what they need at home.” “School is more important than ever.”

Her interest in 4-H was driven by the same motivation – kids’ need for a compass – a connection to something wholesome and good.

I don’t think anyone had as busy a yard as Joanne when the hummingbirds arrived each spring. They drank her out of house and home. Secretly I think she invested in sugar futures.

Joanne was CU Maurice River’s best recruiter and she loved representing CU at Bay Day and the Eagle Festival. When it came to bringing in new members she was actually competitive. “You know, I signed up the most people,” she would say. And indeed she did. “Here, just sign here, you should be a member.” And they did. People didn’t refuse Joanne.

Joanne was generous – she thought CU should give away hats as a recruitment tool. She even suggested I was too cheap to get them. I said we pay \$10-15 dollars for a hat and membership is only \$20. So finally in exasperation she would give money each year to CU to buy hats. And you know she was right, the hat was the right thing to do. And by the way, “Get Tony a green hat because he leads tours.”

Joanne was a family person. In recent years she told me about growing up on Carmel Road within the Ukrainian community. She spoke of her uncles teaching her to play basketball and her love of Union Lake. “I rowed across the lake when I was 6.”

Then there was Frank, clearly the love of her life. Her eyes lit up when she talked about him. She was so proud of his taking water quality samples and she would come to the office to make sure she picked up his new supplies. He was very conscientious and she beamed when she mentioned his devotion to the task.

Her children were very important to her and she would talk about Shelly and her horse and Frankie and his turtles.

Joanne may not be physically with us anymore but her lessons and words stick with us still. I have no doubt that her children are guided by the same honorable principles as their mother. God’s speed, Joanne.

Our condolences go to friends and family: her son Frank, his wife Cheryl, and her daughter Shelly and her husband JJ.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Jane Morton Galetto". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid, with a large loop at the end.

Jane Morton Galetto
CU Maurice River Board President



Joanne gets a special award at the Ah Why Knot recognition event 2009.



Chuck Wyble presents Joanne Murphine an Outstanding Citizen Award on behalf of the Chamber of Commerce - 2013.



Joanne with her husband of over 50 years Frank.



Joanne representing CU at 2008 Bay Day.

Joanne Murphine Obituary

April 29, 1939 – June 28, 2026

Joanne Murphine, a cherished lifelong resident of Millville, NJ, passed away peacefully on Sunday, June 28th, 2026. Joanne was a beloved mother, devoted community member, and a friend to many.

Joanne dedicated 12 years of her life as a Teacher's Aide with Millville Public Schools, where her passion for working with children left a lasting impact on countless young lives. Her career also included roles at Prudential, Duralith, and an impressive 27-year tenure delivering the Press of AC. Her commitment to her work and community was unwavering.

A proud volunteer with 4-H for over 50 years, Joanne was affectionately known as "Mama Murph" to many. Her dedication extended to her active membership and service on the Board of Trustees of C.U. Maurice River. She was the recipient of Vineland's Hometown Heroes award due to her extensive volunteer background. Joanne's love for the outdoors was evident in her enjoyment of fishing, boating, and gardening. She also found joy in coaching basketball for St. Mary's School for many

years. She enjoyed rides in her golf cart or her car down to the river to watch the eagles, osprey, and otters and to sit and reflect on a daily basis. Joanne's generous spirit was further exemplified through her participation in the Fresh Air Program in Brooklyn, NY, where she opened her home to children for two weeks each summer. Her love for animals was well-known, and she cherished the companionship they provided.

Joanne was preceded in death by her beloved spouse, Frank Murphine Jr and parents Joseph D'Agostino; and Katherine Panczynszyn. She is survived by her son, Frank Murphine III, and his wife Cheryl; and her daughter, Shelly Hares, and her husband JJ.

Family and friends are invited to pay their respects during the visitation at Christy Funeral Home, 11 West Broad St., Millville, NJ, on Thursday July 16th 2026, from 9:00 am to 11:00 am. A memorial service will follow at 11:00 am, celebrating Joanne's remarkable life and the indelible mark she left on her community. Memories of Joanne and condolences for her family may be shared on her tribute wall.

In lieu of flowers, donations in Joanne's name may be made to Cumberland County 4-H, 291 Morton Avenue, Millville, NJ 08332, Every Little Cat Rescue, 233 Carmel Road, Millville, NJ 08332, or the Oasis Animal Sanctuary, 698 Central Avenue, Franklinville NJ 08322.



Joanne Murphine is surrounded by, from left, Raelynn Wilford, Delaney Wilford, Emily Hyson and Peyton Wilford, during Cumberland County 4-H's 2022 Achievement Night program, where she was recognized for 50 years of service at the Cooperative Extension of Cumberland County.



Citizens United To Protect the Maurice River and Its Tributaries | P.O. Box 474 | Millville, NJ 08332 US

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