



Joan D. Vitale

April 2, 1924 - July 4, 2020

Joan was born in New York on April 2, 1924 and grew up in San Francisco. She served in the Women's Marine Corps at the age of 20 and achieved the rank of Corporal. She later attended the University of Colorado on the GI Bill and earned a Bachelor Degree in English. On a visit to Los Angeles in 1952, she met Joseph Vitale, a motion picture character actor and were soon married. Their special needs son Paul Victor was born in 1953. Joan and Joseph became active with New Horizons, where their son began his schooling. They were instrumental in establishing Leichman Middle School, the first school in the San Fernando Valley for special needs children. Through her efforts at CSUN, her son's paintings are now on permanent display at CSUN in the College of Education: The Paul Vitale Gallery-"Art Outside The Lines". Joan has been active with the Granada Hills Women's Club, Friends of the Granada Hills Branch Public Library and the San Fernando Valley Women Marines Association. She was a member of St. John Baptist de la Salle Catholic Church, and was a philanthropist having supported many charities. We called her "Auntie Mame" as she was an avid traveler and visited many diverse locales as Africa, New Zealand and Antarctica. Joan passed away on July 4, 2020 at 7:00 PM amidst the many fireworks celebrations. A fitting send off for a one who served her country. She is survived by her cousin Richard Erkus, his wife Sandra, their children Janet and William, her cousin Laura Rosen and her family and Carol Heiderman as well as her many friends who loved and respected her.

In lieu of flowers family requests that donations be made to San Fernando Association of the retarded - New Horizons, 15725 Parthenia Street, North Hills, CA 91343

Previous Events

Graveside Service

JUL **28**. 9:30 AM - 10:15 AM (PT)

San Fernando Mission Cemetery
11160 Stranwood Ave.
Mission Hills, CA 91345

Tribute Wall



“ *Joan D. Vitale*

October 07, 2023 at 09:33 AM



“ *Joan D. Vitale*

October 05, 2023 at 03:41 PM



“ *Sincere condolences from the members of the Women Marines Association. “If the Army and the Navy ever looked on Heaven’s Scenes, they will find the streets are guarded by United States Marines.” (3rd stanza of the Marines Hymn). Take comfort in knowing your beloved Marine has left this life to take up her rightful place in Heaven’s detachment.*

The Women Marines Association is dedicated to preserving the history of our veterans. We continue to build a diverse collection of uniforms, photos, papers and other artifacts donated by our members and their families. If you have items you would like to know more about or would like to have your loved one memorialized by donating items to the collection, our Historian, Nancy Wilt, would be happy to speak with you. She can be reached at: Nancy Wilt, WMA Historian, Curator of the Women of the Corps Collection, PO Box 633, Hunt, TX 78024, Phone: 830-238-3893, or niwilt@aol.com.

*Eileen Skahill
National Chaplain
Chaplain@womenmarines.org*

Eileen Skahill - October 01, 2020 at 01:56 PM