



Joann Toler

September 10, 1934 - January 16, 2025

Joann Toler will be remembered for her vibrant personality, optimism, love of community, music, fashion sense, and beauty. Never without her lipstick, she made the world a brighter place, every day.

With heartfelt sadness, we share the news of Rosetta "Joann" Colyer Toler's passing on January 16, 2025, at the age of 90. Joann departed this world peacefully at Mercy Hospital in Cape Girardeau, Mo., surrounded by the love and comfort of her family and friends.

Joann was born on September 10, 1934, in McClure, Ill., to John and Lena Colyer. She spent her childhood in the close-knit community of McClure where she attended the local school and formed lifelong connections. After graduating high school, Joann enrolled in business college in Cape Girardeau, laying the foundation for her role in the Shawnee Community Unit School District #84.

After a short but memorable chapter as a "Blue Bell Jingle Girl," the musical commercials promoting Blue Bell bologna, Joann took the position as the secretary to the Superintendent's office at Shawnee schools. She was in this position for more than 40 years. For her, Shawnee was more than just a local school district, it was a community whose values helped shape her approach to life, and where she forged long-lasting friendships.

When Joann wasn't working in the Superintendent's office, she shared her love of music as a member of the Shawnee Trio, performing across the region alongside her dearest friends: Deloris Burchyett (mother of world-famous opera singer Christine Brewer), June Morgan, Mary Jones, and Kerry Baugher. For Joann, music wasn't just a pastime, in important ways, it was the essence of her life. Music allowed her to develop her talent to create real beauty and bring joy to others. She credited her long, healthy, and happy life to the harmony and happiness that music brought to her soul.

One of the greatest joys of Joann's life-and a role she deeply cherished-was being "Aunt Joann." It was in this beloved capacity that her vibrant spirit truly shone, bringing endless laughter, warmth, and treasured memories to all who were lucky enough to call her their aunt.

In 1975, Joann married Ray Toler. They shared 17 wonderful years of marriage until Ray's passing in 1992. Ray's children-Diane (Norman) Dale, Donna (Tony) Gowin, and David (Barbara) Toler-remained an important part of Joann's life even after Ray's death. Joann frequently participated in Toler family holiday events, and Ray's family consistently made it a priority to attend every celebration honoring Joann.

After retiring, Joann embraced an active and fulfilling life in Cape Girardeau. She became a dedicated member of the Optimist Club, let her vibrant personality shine as a Bingo caller at the Senior Center, and found spiritual connection at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.

Joann Toler is survived by her daughter, Robyn Walker; her son-in-law, Frank Christensen; and her sister-in-law, Shirley (Clyde) Colyer.

She is also survived by her nieces and nephews: Barbara (Joe) Smith, Glenda

(James Robert) Sheffer, Jeanette Colyer, Karen Brust, Linda (Al) Behm, Debbie (Hollis) Bond, Myra Jo (Steve) Quisenberry, Gayla Jean (Art) Long, James Scott Kaufman, Teresa (Gary) Livesay, Tony (Pauline) Hale, Jeffery (Laila) Colyer, Lana (Lee) Piner, Alan Abercrombie, and Beth (Mike) Eftink.

Joann was preceded in death by her husband, Ray Toler; her parents, John and Lena Mainer Colyer; and her siblings: Lawana (Robert) Burchyett, Eugenia (Lowell) Hale, John Lee (Elsa) Colyer, Marjorie Colyer, Lena (Everd) Hill, Mary C. (John) Abercrombie, Reva (James) Kaufman, and Clyde Colyer.

She was also preceded in death by her nieces and nephews: Shelby (Shannon) Hollingsworth, Erma (Shannon) Hollingsworth, Lindell (Rose) Hill, Kay (Ron) Brown, and John L. Colyer Jr.

"Aunt Joann" was cherished by countless grandnieces, grandnephews, great-grandnieces, and great-grandnephews, all of whom were inspired by her vibrant and fun-loving spirit. She adored each of them deeply, leaving behind a legacy of joy, love, and cherished memories in their hearts.

Joann's visitation and brunch will be from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm on Sunday, January 26, at Ford & Sons - Sprigg St. Chapel in Cape Girardeau.

Her celebration of life will be at 12:00 pm Sunday, January 26, at the funeral home with Bishop Clifton Gentry and the Rev. Steven Smith officiating.

The burial will be at Lindsey Cemetery in McClure, Ill., following the service.

Ford & Sons Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to one of the below:

Shawnee CUSD #84
c/o District Office
3365 State Route 3 North
Wolf Lake, Ill. 62998

Lindsey Cemetery
c/o Treasurer Pat Baldwin
34422 Grapevine Trail
McClure, Ill. 62957

The family would like to express its heartfelt gratitude to the doctors, nurses, and staff at Mercy Hospital for their kindness, professionalism, and support during this difficult time.

Cemetery Details

Lindsey Cemetery

McClure, IL 62957

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN 26. 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

Ford and Sons Sprigg St. Chapel
118 S. Sprigg St.
Cape Girardeau, MO 63703

Funeral Service

JAN 26. 12:00 PM (CT)

Ford and Sons Sprigg St. Chapel
118 S. Sprigg St.
Cape Girardeau, MO 63703

Tribute Wall

CB

“ Christine and Ross Brewer planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Joann Toler.

Christine and Ross Brewer - January 24, 2025 at 01:16 PM

CB

“ Christine and Ross Brewer purchased the Serene Retreat for the family of Joann Toler.



Christine and Ross Brewer - January 24, 2025 at 01:16 PM

VC

“ Joann and I were friends since grade school and we always kept in touch. I will deeply miss her, but I know she is singing with the Angels in Heaven and enjoying every minute of it.

Vellabe Kreuziger - January 22, 2025 at 04:04 PM

JB

“ I was thirteen years old when I first became acquainted with Ms. Toler. She was such an inspiration. She is certainly one of God's angels RIP dear Joann Janet Braun

Janet Braun - January 22, 2025 at 02:35 PM

NL

“ Your life was a blessing, your memory a treasure. You are loved beyond words and missed beyond measure. We love you Aunt Joann.



Nicola Livesay - January 19, 2025 at 10:06 PM

MJ

“ She was a beautiful lady, inside and out.

Mark Johnson - January 19, 2025 at 03:44 PM

BL

“ My sweet Joanna I will miss our outings together and going to hear gospel singers at different churches. You changed my life and additude about things and people and how to let things go when someone hurt me and to forgive. You never spoke ill of anyone and always ready to forgive others. I loved hearing the stories of your life and the things you did when you were younger, and about all the travels though your daughter Robin and Frank, How exciting the stories were of you and your family. You helped me to get through the loss of my grandson last March and was right here for me and with me.

We had a lot of things in common growing up in the country. I really knew that you cared about me and others and I about you, even when my crazy Simese cat insisted he wanted to set on your lap. I knew you like those cats when I saw the statue of the same cat at your apartment we had a great laugh about him. You cared so much about your extended family and always talked about the wonderful things you did together with them and how much they all loved you. I got to meet many of them and they were all as kind and sweet as you. I shall see you again soon my dear friend.

Barbra Lloyd - January 19, 2025 at 03:40 PM

JC

“ JeAnette C COLYER lit a candle in memory of Joann Toler



JeAnette C COLYER - January 18, 2025 at 02:29 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Joann Toler.

January 18, 2025 at 02:18 PM



“ Divine Light was purchased for the family of Joann Toler.



January 18, 2025 at 02:18 PM

JC

“ My heart is broken that the angels have come for her. My Aunt Joann was an indescribable one-of-a-kind in a great way. I will miss her so much and I thank God for memories. Goodbye for now, Beautiful.

JeAnette C COLYER - January 18, 2025 at 02:12 PM