



Joyce Maxine Verney

December 8, 1929 - January 22, 2025

Joyce Maxine (Holben) Verney passed away peacefully on January 22, 2025. She was born on December 8th, 1929, on a wheat farm near Genesee Idaho to Jeanette Collins and Meridith Holben. The youngest of five, she adored her brothers Marion, Damon, and Melvin Holben, and her sister Ann Bardwell.

Taught by her mother, a classical pianist, Joyce was a gifted singer. Her first solo was at age 4, at the schoolhouse down the road. She developed a beautiful singing voice. Joyce learned piano and became an accomplished saxophonist and clarinetist. She attended junior and senior high school in Lewiston, ID. Starting at age 14, she spent summers at local ranches as the cook.

Joyce attended Park College, Kansas City, MO, where she continued studying voice while majoring in home economics. One of her professors expected her to become a professional opera singer, but she became a teacher. Joyce met her husband, Edward Talbot Verney, at college. They married on campus, December 12th, 1951. Joyce and Ed graduated in 1952 and moved to Metlakatla, AK, Ed's hometown. They taught school and started their family there. In 1955 they moved to Loomis, and later to Tonasket, WA. The family grew.

Joyce taught in the Tonasket high school and later grade school in Oroville

and Tonasket. The family participated in church, in Loomis, then Tonasket, enjoying friends, and the larger community. In 1969 the family moved to Spokane. Joyce loved teaching little children. She felt they needed love, care, and education, to secure the future of the world. She was a mentor to the new kindergarten teachers. A student, from Oroville, wrote in the Spokesman Review, that his teacher, Mrs. Verney, changed his life.

After retiring, they moved back to Tonasket in 1990. Joyce was proud to be one of the founding members of the Senior Exercise program. They enjoyed spending time with friends and cherished the scenery of the valley.

Joyce sang for weddings, funerals, and in church choirs. She was soloist for the Messiah, and O Holy Night. Joyce had a reputation as an excellent cook and friends treasured her recipes. Joyce thought she should have been a historian. She loved sharing family history over her lifetime and had an amazing, detailed, accurate memory.

Joyce was preceded in death by her siblings and husband. She is survived by her children, Darrel, Jayne (husband Dave Isaak), Jann, and Steven (wife Cecille), her grandchildren, Malika, Mariah, and Ryan (wife Cristina), and her great granddaughters, Eleanor, and Laura. Joyce will be missed, as mother, grandmother, and good friend to many.

Arrangements are by River Valley Funeral and Cremation. In lieu of flowers, contributions to the Tonasket Senior Center or Tonasket Community Church would be appreciated. A memorial service will be held in the spring.

Tribute Wall

DK

“ I remember when we had our Verney Family Reunion in Metlakatla. I never knew that Auntie Joyce was so musically inclined. I was so proud of her when she sang for all of us at the evening gathering at the community center. It was beautiful. She sang from the heart. I'll surely miss Auntie Joyce sharing her music and vast knowledge about so many topics.

You four kids took such good care of your mother. Thank you! The four of us kids can surely appreciate what's involved in providing such loving care.

When you think of your mom and dad, just smile. They were good people and will be missed by all of us.

Love to you all,

Dottie and Dave

Dorothy M. Kiehle - March 05, 2025 at 09:42 AM

JS

“ God grant the family comfort during this time of great loss. We remember Aunt Joyce as a wonderful hostess and great, devoted mother to her children and husband. We will miss her.



John and Rose Sebastian - February 01, 2025 at 02:49 PM

MG

“ *In Loving Memory of Joyce Verney*

It is with heavy hearts that we remember Joyce Verney, a wonderful soul who touched so many lives with her kindness, warmth, and generosity. Joyce, along with Ed and their children, became cherished family friends to my parents, Ken and Joan, and my brothers Jeff, Brent, and Kelly. Together, our families shared countless memories, from everyday moments to fun activities, laughter, and love.

Joyce was truly one of a kind—her incredible cooking, especially her delicious desserts, will never be forgotten. Every time we visited, there was always something special waiting for us, a true reflection of her nurturing heart. Joyce was a beautiful and kind soul, and that same beauty and kindness is evident in her children, who carry her legacy in everything they do.

Losing a mother, and especially a mother as remarkable as Joyce, marks the beginning of a new chapter in life. From personal experience, I know that a mother's love never truly leaves. She will remain with you, always watching over and guiding you with her unwavering love.

Our thoughts and prayers are with the Verney family during this difficult time. Joyce's light will continue to shine through each of you, and she will forever be remembered and loved by all who had the privilege of knowing her.

*With deepest sympathy,
Molly, Jeff, & Kelly (Smith)*

Molly (Smith) Grove - January 30, 2025 at 12:28 AM

BH

Enjoyed reading this obituary and remembering my interactions with my aunt and learning things I hadn't known. I always enjoyed my time with her especially when she was recalling family history. Aunt Joyce was a treasure. Blessings always to her family.

Barry Holben - January 30, 2025 at 07:56 PM

RB

From Rena Boswell

Jann, now I know where you came by your kind and gentle way . I never met your mom, I can see you are a lot like her. She made the world a better place as have you.

Rena Boswell - January 31, 2025 at 03:47 PM