



Joan Francis Walker

Submitted with thanks to Joan's lifelong Vassar classmate Pat Cain (center, red blouse)

Joanie was a lifelong friend – I tell folks I owe my entire career to her. I visited her in Hyde Park (when she was married to that crazy lawyer) on my way back to England in 1970. I was struggling with a thesis on free will and determinism at the University of Liverpool, had fallen in love with someone in the US while back here for my brother's wedding, and thought I needed a graceful exit from Liverpool and a career with meaning in the US. Joanie had just decided that she might apply to law school and so had ordered some LSAT prep tests to review. I remember sitting up with her late at night and going over those tests and saying to myself, hey, I can do this. She actually gave me the sample tests and I signed up to take the bar exam at the American Embassy the following spring. The rest is history. What if I had not visited her in 1970? What if she had not given me those sample exams?

She and I reconnected in LA when I was visiting there at USC in the 1980s. In 1991 Jean and I got jobs teaching at the Iowa law school and Joanie and I renewed connections around Iowa (that was her home state). We connected periodically over the years and she came as a special out of town guest to my wedding in San Francisco in 2008. (I attach a photo – that is Joanie in the white top sitting next to me as my good friend Barbara Aldave is standing to explain her connection to Jean and me – something we asked all present to do – it was great fun).

Last June, in prep for our upcoming 50th, I finally tracked Joanie down (long email absences make me nervous these days) and asked if she would consider doing something she always told me was her secret desire – to perform as a torch song singer. Instead, she told me she had purchased a Keith Urban guitar and was working on a performance with her younger brother Brian for a Tahoe Hotel upcoming this fall. She never made it to that dream, alas. And we will unfortunately be deprived of her beautiful voice at our 50th.

Rest In Peace, Joanie Walker.

Following is Joan's obit from *Legacy.com*

Joan Frances Walker of Reno, Nevada died unexpectedly at home in her sleep on July 21. She is survived by her loving family: her sister Jeanne Ansley (Jim) of Arlington Heights, Illinois; her brother Brian Walker of Tucson, Arizona; and her brother Ralph Walker (Linda) of Reno. She is also survived by her nephews, Jens Walker (Heidi) of Reno, Damon Walker (Amy) of Santa Cruz, CA) and Trevor Walker of Oakland CA, 3 great nieces, and a great nephew, She also has two step daughters. She was preceded in death by her parents, Dr. Edgar E. Walker and Alice Walker of Norwalk, Iowa.

Joan was born in Anamosa, Iowa on Mother's Day, May 13, 1945 into a preacher's family. She graduated from Vassar College, majoring in drama and was a talented actress and musician. She graduated from The Potomac School of Law in Washington, DC and served over the course of her legal career as a public defender in Atlanta, GA and law clerk to a federal magistrate, a Law School instructor in Criminal Law, and a deputy district attorney in Los Angeles, CA.

She lived in Reno, NV for the past dozen years and was a member of First United Methodist Church, enjoyed taking part in their book club and had a sizable library. She loved the many cats she had over the years. She was a very caring, compassionate, fun loving and giving person to her family and many friends from all over the country. She also was a resolute proponent of human and animal rights. Her wonderful spirit will be missed by all of us. It was Joan's wishes to be cremated and have her ashes dispersed in Paris, France, a life-long destination, which was never reached.

A private Memorial Service has been held. The public is invited to a Memorial Service at First United Methodist Church, at 209 West 1st Street, Reno, on Saturday, October 25th at 2:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall. In lieu of flowers, Memorial Contributions may be made to the Humane Society at 2825 Longley Lane, NV, 89502, The Assistance League of Reno, PO Box 7376, Reno, NV 89510, or Artown, 528 W.1st St., Reno, NV 89503.