



Rita Marie Koch

December 16, 1936 - December 7, 2020

Visit the following link to view Rita's slideshow. <https://youtu.be/UOTFOEFx41Q>

Rita M. Koch, 83, of Fort Collins, died December 7, 2020 peacefully in her own bed in her own home, exactly like she wanted it. Rita was born Dec. 16, 1936 in a small farmhouse just outside of Barada, NE. She attended District 18 / Fike Country School, graduating 8th grade in 1949. Growing up, Rita and her family were members of St. Anne's Catholic Church in Shubert, NE. She attended Sacred Heart High School in Falls City, NE 1949-1953, graduating at 16. Rita was a student at Loretto Heights College in Denver for a year. At 24, Rita went to the Maryknoll Convent in Missouri. She liked the daily schedule, but left the convent at the age of 25. Rita attended Creighton University in Omaha, NE, graduating with a Bachelor of Arts degree in History in 1966. Following graduation, Rita went on a 3-week European trip. Shortly after, she answered an ad in the paper which read, "Teachers Needed in Alaska." While in Alaska, Rita survived the 1967 flood in Fairbanks. After living through a robbery in a small jewelry store in Anchorage, she got up, bought something and left. In Anchorage, Rita met John G. Koch. They married Oct. 10, 1970 at Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Lincoln, NE. Rita began her secretarial career in 1951. She retired from her position as a legal assistant from Hill & Hill Law Firm (Fort Collins) in the late 1990s. She donated to many, many charities including a substantial donation to The Chesterton Academy of St.

John Paul II, the first Catholic High School in Northern Colorado. While working with Catholic Extension volunteers in her mid-20s, Rita learned to play bridge in Buffalo, Oklahoma. Rita Koch was a Silver Life Master in the American Contract Bridge League. She traveled regularly to Cabo San Lucas, Mexico. Rita is preceded in death by her mother and father and three of her four siblings as well as by her husband, John G. Koch. Rita is survived by her sibling, Janice Rose; her daughter, Laura Koch and her son-in-law, Andrew Vogt; her son, Jason Koch and her daughter-in-law, Hwaling Coffey, and their three children, Jaeling, Meilan, and Kainan Coffey Koch.

A Private Rosary, Mass of Christian Burial, and Interment will be held at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, please make donations to The Chesterton Academy of St. John Paul II, the first Catholic High School in Northern Colorado at <https://chestertonjpii.org/donate>

Cemetery Details

Grandview Cemetery

1900 W. Mountain Ave.
Fort Collins, CO 80521

Previous Events

Rosary

DEC 28. 7:00 PM (MT)

Bohlender Funeral Chapel
121 W. Olive Street
Fort Collins, CO 80524

Funeral Mass

DEC 29. 11:00 AM (MT)

Saint John XXIII Catholic Church
1220 University Ave.
Fort Collins, 80521

Tribute Wall



“ *Bohlender Funeral Chapel created a Webcast in memory of Rita Marie Koch*



Bohlender Funeral Chapel - December 28, 2020 at 07:24 PM



“ *Here is a short slideshow celebrating Mom's life. Hwaling made it. Please share <https://youtu.be/UOTFOEFx41Q>*

Jason Koch - December 29, 2020 at 09:52 PM



“ *Brian Fraus lit a candle in memory of Rita Marie Koch*



Brian Fraus - December 29, 2020 at 02:26 PM



Mrs. Koch you will be missed. Laura and Jason we Love you guys.

Brian Fraus - December 29, 2020 at 02:27 PM

LK

“ Mom was supported through her last months at home by getting to play on-line bridge with Fiona and Gladys, as well as by going to church. Mom truly was an adventurer, as my brother Jason points out. Mom went on a Panama Canal Cruise, she drove herself and I to New Orleans after Katrina to help do a bit of reconstruction work, she went to a relative's wedding overseas and to Jason and Hwaling's wedding in San Miguel de Allende, MX. As a child, mom took us on road trips around the country, visiting our grandparents both in Chicago and in Nebraska.

Laura Koch - December 26, 2020 at 09:52 PM

SY

She stole her brothers inheritance when he became l'll. He died in my arms Penniless and heartbroken in a nursing home.

Stu's wife of 50 years - April 27, 2023 at 01:40 PM

LK

“ Laura K. purchased the Bountiful Memories Casket et Spray for the family of Rita Marie Koch.



Laura K. - December 26, 2020 at 02:01 PM

“ *Momories, Part 2 of 2*

We drove to and from Falls City, Nebraska many times through the years to visit mom's family. 2009-2018 our drives were often multiple times a year to tend to the Watton family estate including the Watton Farmhouse. Mom and I stayed many times at the Vision Inn in Falls City, NE, and at the farmhouse itself, enjoying meals at A&G. Mom, Andrew and I spent one Thanksgiving at Casino White Cloud, KS. Right before mom sold the farmhouse, we enjoyed the total solar eclipse from the front lawn of the farmhouse August 21, 2017. We made multiple fun stops along the trips to and from Falls City, especially after mom sold the farmhouse. We went to the Whiskey Run Winery in Brownville, NE; Wessels Living History Farm in York, NE; The Archway (The Great Platte River Road Archway Monument) in Kearney, NE; Robert Henri Museum in Cozad, NE; Lasso Espresso and The Pony Express Station & Museum in Gothenburg, NE; Ole's Big Game Steakhouse, in Paxton, NE; Historic Front Street in Ogallala, NE; and visited friends and family in Omaha, Lincoln and Grand Island. One of my favorite memories of mom is her driving around the University of Nebraska - Lincoln (UNL) campus on the sidewalks and over curbs, while exploring Andrew's college haunts. Mom and I would sing songs and play location place name games on the 9-hour drive to and from Falls City, NE.

Since mom came home from assisted living, Donna and Jack Vogt often brought meals over for my mom. We had some dinner parties at mom's dining room table with Donna and Jack Vogt and also with Jeanne and Bill Ross. We also had a couple movie nights with popcorn, one time including Eric Littlefield. Jason, Hwaling, Jaeling, Meilan and Kainan came to visit over labor day weekend.

Thank you to all our family and friends who are major parts of these condensed stories who I did not name in this brief Momories anthology. You know who you are. And these stories in my heart are not complete without you.

Laura Koch - December 25, 2020 at 05:26 PM

“ *Momories, Part 1 of 2*

After mom passed away and I wrote her obituary, fond memories (memories of mom) started to trickle in, in the wee hours of the morning, before getting out of bed.

Until I was maybe even in my early 40s I would still sometimes sit on her lap with her in her big chair watching TV, I enjoyed sitting there until after a few minutes she would groan, “Oh Laura, You’re so heavy.” That was my cue to get up and stop squashing my aging mother. Mom was my massage model. On my business cards for my massage therapy practice is a picture of me massaging her. I want to keep that picture on my business card until I retire. When she no longer laid down for massages, I still regularly gave her short neck and shoulder rubs with her sitting in her wheelchair. Her neck bothered her consistently ever since her leg amputation. I have learned regret after someone dies is common, and I regret that I didn’t massage her more.

Mom created some beautiful clothes for herself and her family. She was quite the seamstress! Mom sang in choral groups including Sweet Adelines and Vox Renatus. Mom was a square dancer. She enjoyed murder mysteries and crime stories on TV and in books. She did crossword puzzles and the Jumble. Mom helped many people. A runaway and a couple friends of mine each stayed at mom’s house for a time, either for free or for super cheap. Mom helped some friends buy their house. Mom took us to shows at the Denver Center of the Performing Arts, including taking us to The Phantom of the Opera twice. We would go to the Canyon Concert Ballet’s version of The Nutcracker at The Lincoln Center in Fort Collins, CO many Decembers.

Laura, Andrew and mom spent time together in Falls City, NE; Austin, TX; and at her timeshares in Club Cascadas de Baja in Cabo San Lucas, MX and Gold Point in Breckenridge, CO. I spent many a mother’s day and even a labor day picnic with mom up at

Estes Park along Trail Ridge Road usually at Hidden Valley, the old retired ski resort. Once we stayed overnight at The Stanley Hotel, participating in a Murder Mystery game. We visited Jason, Hwaling and family multiple times in Huntington Beach, CA. The last time was a road trip, and we made multiple fun stops en route including Pioneer Saloon in Goodsprings, NV; The Fort restaurant outside Morrison, CO; and the Mother Cabrini Shrine outside Golden, CO. We visited Jason & Hwaling at their beautiful new home in Las Vegas, NV Thanksgiving 2019.

When Laura was single, she went on several fun trips alone with mom. They spent a Mother's Day Weekend at Nagle Warren Mansion in Cheyenne, WY enjoying the Afternoon Tea, going on a Historic Downtown Walking Tour of Cheyenne and taking a day trip to visit Fort Laramie. Another Mother's Day Weekend was spent in Central City and Black Hawk, CO walking around looking at historic buildings, most memorable being The Central City Opera. When an old friend got married in Colorado Springs, we stayed in a Victorian Bed & Breakfast and poked around Manitou Springs including the Cliff Dwellings and the many drinkable springs of Manitou. One of Laura's birthday weekends, we took a scenic drive on Highway 7, the Peak-to-Peak Scenic Byway. We stopped and listened to Uncle Earl, an all girl fiddle band, at a coffee shop in Nederland. We went on a Fort Collins' Historic Homes Tour and visited the Fort Collins' 1883 Waterworks, the Museo de las Tres Colonias, and the Avery House.

Laura Koch - December 25, 2020 at 05:25 PM

LK

“ *Saint Rita. Patron Saint of Impossible Causes, Difficult Marriages and Parenthood. <https://saintrita-church.com/saint-rita/>*

Laura Koch - December 25, 2020 at 05:15 PM

MP

“ Jason and Laura,
Our thoughts and caring are extended to you. We know this has been a sad and difficult time for you and your families. We were so surprised to read of your mom's passing as we often think of her as we ride our bikes through the neighborhood every summer and talk about some happening (most of them good) with "the boys". She always wore a smile and even a twinkle in her eye hinting at a comic remark she was about to make. She had a wit and a sense of humor that we both envied and enjoyed. She was one of the most patient persons we know. Grief is such a private time and yet please know we are thinking of you as you say good-bye to your mom.
Monte and Pat Peterson

Monte and Pat Peterson - December 16, 2020 at 03:55 PM

LS

“ We remember Rita (Mrs. Koch or Mamma Koch as I called her growing up) as a compassionate and courageous woman. In her presence we always felt like we belonged, we mattered and we could make a difference. She chose the hard right over the easy wrong and kept us all honest in the process. I am a better husband and father for having Rita in my life during adolescence. Rest in Peace Mrs. Koch
Lonnie Soloff

Lonnie Soloff - December 14, 2020 at 11:53 AM

CK

“ We were blessed to have Rita as our godmother. She was always enthusiastic about our musical endeavors and very kind and generous. We have so many good memories of her.

Clare & Keith



Clare and Keith - December 13, 2020 at 09:46 PM

MK

“ I met Rita through Blessed John XXIII Catholic Parish during the 1980's. Her devotion to her Faith was readily apparent and made manifest in her then desire to help establish a Catholic High School in Northern Colorado. Her long held dream finally became reality with The Chesterton Academy of St. John Paul II, currently housed in Windsor. We are thankful for her and her family's commitment to the cause of Catholic education.

Mark and Pat Korb

Mark Korb - December 13, 2020 at 05:54 PM

EM

“ What a beautiful tribute to an amazing woman who spent her life thinking of others. The letters, thoughtful notes and words from her to my family and I have blessed me other the years. I'm so thankful to have known her kindness and love. Our thoughts and prayers are with your family during this time. Emilie, Frank and girls

emilie - December 12, 2020 at 12:02 PM

EL

“ I only met Rita a handful of times but was always struck by her warmth and gentle spirit, that smile, and her laugh that resonated from deep in her soul. Her love for her family was palpable. She will live on through them. My deepest condolences.

Emily B Link - December 12, 2020 at 10:53 AM

FI

“ I was privileged to be Rita's friend and bridge partner for almost 20 years. She was so devoted to the game and to her partners that she played up until 2 days before her passing. On our last hand together she played excellent defense setting the opponent's contract and taking the last trick with her 2 of spades. Great job, partner! 🙌
Fiona

Fiona - December 11, 2020 at 08:25 PM

CL

“ Once, when I had no place to go, Rita took me in and let me live in her basement for over 18 months until I could get back on my feet. In that time I got to know her as a kind, generous, personable lady in the truest sense of the term. Her many acts of kindness to me and my wife will never be forgotten. God speed.
Chris Long

Chris Long - December 11, 2020 at 12:08 PM