



## Joan Andrejko

September 7, 2021

Latham NY

It is with great sadness that we write of the death of our beloved mother, Joan (Kopcza) Andrejko. Joan was predeceased by the love of her life, her husband and soulmate, Robert Stephen Andrejko.

Joan adored her late mother and father, Olga Sklaryk Kopcza and John Kopcza, and her late sister, Doris Karafanda. She is survived by her children, Andy and Tracey, Andy's wife, Pam, and her grandchildren, Kelly, Kristin, Matthew, Elizabeth, and Rebecca. Joan loved nothing more than hearing about her grandchildren's lives, visiting them, and eating some delicious food together.

A graduate of Cohoes High School and Albany State, Joan taught Social Studies at Cohoes Middle School for over 25 years. She was always fair, firm, fully prepared, and emphasized fun in learning. As an educator, her passion and legacy were recognized locally, nationally, and internationally. Joan was a Teacher of the Year of Cohoes, a recipient of the Capital District Social Studies Neidelberger Award, New York State Elementary Social Studies Teacher of the Year, and a New York State Teacher of the Year Finalist. She received acknowledgment from NASA for her application to the Teacher in Space Program. Joan spent one summer in Lithuania mentoring teachers

about her self-developed techniques of hands-on education. Joan's teaching legacy touched the National Social Studies Organization, Capital District Council for Social Studies, National Geographic Society, and NYS Department of Education throughout her career and after retirement.

Within her cherished City of Cohoes, Joan served on the Cohoes Library Board of Directors, the Character Ed Board, and the CHS Alumni board. Joan volunteered with the Cohoes Senior Center, the Cohoes Music Hall, the Capital Reparatory Theatre, Proctor's Theater in Schenectady, and the City of Albany at many Tulip Queen receptions and Times Union Arena sporting events.

Joan spent her free time gardening in her yard and traveling with her husband to over 30 countries to experience as much of the world as possible. She brought back stories and mementos from her travels to her classroom to instill a love of geography, travel, and tolerance of all peoples and cultures within her students.

Joan's life was blessed by her caregivers, Team Joan (Lisa, Lori, Meghan, and more), for making her comfortable, happy, and safe in her home. Mom was proud to be a Ukrainian American and Greek Catholic who had great faith and adoration of the Blessed Mary. A graveside service will be held on Friday September 10, at 4pm in the St. Peter and Paul's Ukrainian Cemetery, Middletown Road, Waterford. Friends are invited to join the Andrejko family at the cemetery to celebrate Joan's life and legacy. There will be no visiting hours or services held at this time.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Joan's memory to the Alzheimer's Association. Fond memories and expressions of sympathy made be made at [marrafuneralhome.com](http://marrafuneralhome.com),



# Cemetery Details

## St Peter and Paul Cemetery

Middletown Rd  
Waterford, NY 12188

# Previous Events

## Service

SEP **10**. 4:00 PM (ET)

St Peter and Paul Cemetery  
Middletown Rd  
Waterford, NY 12188

# Tribute Wall



“ *Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Joan Andrejko.*



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September 10, 2021 at 09:23 AM



“ *I am so sad to hear of Joan's passing. I grew up next door to Joan and her family. I think Joan was my first "adult" friend and I remember enjoying our many conversations as she tended to her flowers along the walkway. In more recent years I've enjoyed visiting during trips home, updating her on my life and introducing her to my now husband. Joan was a special lady and a wonderful friend. My condolences to Tracey (my first babysitter!), Andy and the grandchildren.*

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**Karen (Kiffney) Levy** - September 10, 2021 at 08:41 AM



“ *Mrs. Andrejko was the best Teacher in Middle School. I learned a lot from her. She will truly be missed. My condolences to your family*

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**Robin Clark** - September 09, 2021 at 05:08 PM



“ *Your Mother was one of the greatest Social Studies Teachers I had in the late 80 early 90's. One of the teachers that loved her students. Another I remember about her, is her telling me to stay strong for my Mom, when she came to my Father's funeral. I was only 11 or 12 at the time. RIP 🙏💜*

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**Joseph A. DiDonna** - September 09, 2021 at 03:44 PM

AD

“ *My heartfelt sympathy to Joan,s family. We were commuters while attending Albany State. Later I enjoyed meeting her at the Little League field. Ann Poulin Diamond*

ann diamond - September 09, 2021 at 02:46 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Joan Andrejko.*



September 09, 2021 at 11:46 AM

WS

“ *I remember her well from my years at CMS...so sorry to hear if her passing...prayers for the family!*

Wendy Spendiff - September 09, 2021 at 10:23 AM



“ *She was the BEST teacher! Coupon club because I was not good with Omen Iran over to Iraq! She had so much energy and compassion for everyone! Such a beautiful person! She always stayed late and offered help to anyone who needed it. I am sure she will be remembered and missed by more people then you can imagine! 🥹❤️ So very sorry for your loss, sending prayers and lovely thoughts to your family! Class of "92"*

Jennifer Vautrin - September 09, 2021 at 09:25 AM

SI

“ Beautiful person inside and out.



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**Sara Izzo** - September 09, 2021 at 08:45 AM

LS

“ Joan has been the highlight of my life for the last year and a half. I am so grateful to had been apart of “team joan”. We were like best friends she knew how much I loved her just from the care and long hours spent together she’d always tell me “ I don’t care I’ll never give up on you” with a sad face and say “Oh don’t make me cry”, if you knew me you knew joan. She has told me so many stories about her wonderful life she lived and how much she loved her children and family. God bless you all and may she Rest In Peace as beautiful as she is. I’ll never forget you Joanie❤️

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**Lisa Santos** - September 09, 2021 at 08:28 AM

AM

“ I was fortunate enough to have her as my teacher when I was in Middle School. I remember her being lively and eccentric and very very smart. She made up this fun rhyme to remember the countries in the Middle East and I still remember it to this day. She commanded attention. My heart goes out to her family and friends and my deepest condolences.



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**Audra Miller** - September 09, 2021 at 07:39 AM

PC

“ Sincere condolences to Joan's family. May your happy memories sustain you in your loss. We shared many experiences as team teachers at Cohoes Middle School. All those years in the "annex" with many delights, laughter and fun along with lots of hard work and a commitment to the "kids" of Cohoes. Rest in peace, Joan .  
Pat Carlton

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**Patricia Carlton** - September 09, 2021 at 07:23 AM

AW

“ She was my social studies teacher and made learning a little easier <3 I loved all the learning songs she came up with. She was an amazing teacher <3 my heart goes out to her family. Rest In Peace

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**amy Willette** - September 09, 2021 at 07:02 AM

LC

“ Mrs. Andrejko was my social studies teacher in Middle school. She was one teacher I will personally never forget. She made learning so much fun and I will always tell her stories. May she Rest In Peace❤️

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**Laurie Cohn** - September 08, 2021 at 10:50 PM

KC

“ Joan was my favorite Social Studied teacher back in 6th grade. I learned so much. I loved listening to her stories when she traveled to different countries. I'm sending my condolences to the family.

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**Kerry (Shufelt) Chmielewski** - September 08, 2021 at 10:09 PM

SA

“ Mrs. Andrejko was a teacher of mine when I attended Cohoes Middle School. I loved her energy and her love of teaching. She taught us a phrase to help us remember parts of the Middle East for class, "oh man (oman) I couldn't wait (kuwait) to run over a rock (iraq) in my air Jordan's (jordan) and squeeze a lemon over my head (Lebenon). What an amazing woman she was! She will be missed dearly. Love and prayers to all of her family and friends!  
Sincerely,  
Sarah Austin CMS class of 1997

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**Sarah Austin** - September 08, 2021 at 09:57 PM

LV

“ My mom, Genevieve LaValley, was so fortunate to have met her former neighbor, Joan, later in life and become dear friends. The friendship shared between the two was very special. I had the pleasure of sharing time with Joan when I would visit Genevieve. What a very amazing woman. She will be missed dearly by Genevieve.

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**Lauretta Viglianco** - September 08, 2021 at 08:53 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Joan Andrejko.



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September 08, 2021 at 06:54 PM

MF

“ We send our heartfelt condolences to Andy, Tracey and all of Joan's grandchildren. May loving memories of your Mom and Nana be with you always.

*Marlene and Kimberly Flaherty*

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**Marlene Flaherty** - September 08, 2021 at 06:23 PM