



Connie Louise Ash

November 16, 1925 - April 4, 2023

Connie Louise Ash was born Constance Louise Zatkovich on November 16, 1925 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. She peacefully crossed over to her heavenly home early on a beautiful morning, on April 4, 2023.

Connie was the fifth of seven children born to Leona and Gregory Zatkovich. She spent her childhood and high school years in Pittsburgh, PA. She attended Mt. Mercy College (now Carlow University) where she majored in Literature. After graduating, Connie went to Washington DC, where she wrote mostly human interest stories for The Washington Post, a fitting assignment as Connie had a deep interest in others; she was constantly befriending people, engaging them and helping them whenever she could.

While at The Washington Post, she was accepted for a position with The United States Information Service in Manila, Philippines, where she met Richard Ash, who was working there with US Lines shipping company. They married, had two daughters, Mary Beth and Jennifer, then relocated to Yokohama, Japan, where her daughter Connie and son Richard were born. Connie took full advantage of the adventures and cultural opportunities in Japan and instilled this interest in her children. She enrolled the girls in Japanese language lessons and Richard attended a Japanese Kindergarten. She arranged for Japanese dance lessons and engaged in the cultural holidays. She brought her children to festivals, much to their delight. She would pack up the kids and take them on trips to Kamakura, Hakone, Nikko, Nagoya, Nara and Kyoto. She was actively involved in the children's activities,

especially the Sailfish swim team which practiced and competed year round. Connie loved Japanese gardens, introducing her kids to their beauty at the nearby Sankeien Garden in Yokohama. In Corvallis, she planted a small bamboo grove and Japanese garden. She embraced the arts, studying Sumi-e (ink wash), woodblock printing and watercolor painting, as well as Ikebana, (Japanese flower arranging). She earned a teacher's certificate at the Sogetsu School of Ikebana, and was able to teach the art she loved. A lifelong learner, Connie sought new artistic outlets with oils, acrylics, and charcoal. She created icons, studying with a Romanian master of the art at Oregon State University. She was a member of the Corvallis Art Guild.

Connie was a traveler at heart. After college, she toured parts of Europe with some friends. She eventually went to Asia and saw countries including Vietnam and Hong Kong. In 1992 Connie traveled to Prague with her daughter Jennifer to accept the Tomas Masaryk award (for the promotion of democracy), granted posthumously to her father, Gregory Zatkovich. They were given keys to the Prague castle where they had their own room. The two went to Uzhgorod, her father's birthplace, and from where he later governed as the first governor of Carpathian Ruthenia. They were hosted by the Yamalov family whom they met through the Corvallis Sister Cities organization. With the aid of Oleg Yamalov, they found the headstone of her sister Joan Zatkovich who had died in Uzhgorod at age 3 of scarlet fever. The headstone was in an old overgrown section of Calvary Cemetery.

Corvallis, Oregon was Connie's last permanent residence after living in New Jersey and Guam. She continued traveling when she could, once taking a train round trip cross country, stopping to see family and friends along the way. Her last big adventure was a cruise to Alaska with her dear brother Ted when they were both in their 80's.

Connie lived a total of 49 years in Corvallis. After selling her home in NW Corvallis, she lived at Samaritan Village where she continued to reside independently. She was very involved with the community there, volunteering for special activities, providing her flower arrangements for everyone to enjoy,

and helping to maintain the community garden. She enjoyed watching basketball and was a big Portland Trailblazer fan often checking in with a neighbor or her children on when the next game was scheduled so as not to miss it. When she needed a little more assistance, Connie moved to Prestige West Hills in Corvallis. There she thrived, embracing her new community, making friends left and right. She particularly loved to participate in arts and crafts activities. She also enjoyed exercise, game time and joining her friends for outings.

Connie was a deeply spiritual woman with strong ties to St. Mary's Catholic Church in Corvallis. She was a dear friend to many, making it a mission to introduce herself to new people. If you were new to the church and wanted to get more involved, all you needed to do was follow Connie around. Connie would often donate to charitable causes and was a big proponent for social justice. She was also a long time member of the Caritas group which would receive prayer requests and would meet regularly to carry them out.

Connie was preceded in death by her husband Richard Ash. She is survived by her children Mary Beth and her husband Todd, Jennifer and her husband Roger, Connie and her husband Charlie and Rich and his wife Maria. She had five beloved grandchildren: Justin, Isaac, Loren, Ian and Kalie and two great-grandchildren, Eastyn and Ellisyn and countless friends.

A memorial mass will be held at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Corvallis on Wednesday, June 21 at 11:00 am. A reception will take place immediately after in the church's upper social hall. A private burial at Willamette National Cemetery will follow at a later date, where Connie will be buried next to her husband. Memorial contributions can be sent to ARC of Benton County, or The National Down Syndrome Society.

Please share your thoughts and memories for the family at www.demossturda.com

Cemetery Details

Willamette National Cemetery

Previous Events

Memorial Mass

JUN 21. 11:00 AM (PT)

St. Mary's Catholic Church
501 NW 25th Street
Corvallis, OR 97330