



JoAnn Green Stephens

FEB 23, 1935 - AUG 26, 2025



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JoAnn Green Stephens

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JoAnn Green Stephens, beloved mother/grandmother/wife, embarked Tuesday, August 26 on an extended family history research assignment when she passed peacefully from this world to the next. Ever the avid genealogist, we are certain that shortly after a tearful reunion with loved ones, she started booking appointments to interview each of them. The Sylvesters, Ferres, Birches, McEwans—these were not vague approximations of forebears, but her people, and her life was spent, among other things, getting to know them. If there are computers in heaven, her now nimble fingers are flying across the keyboard, making a record of all they have to say.

Her inquisitive mind had the luckiest of starts, being born the daughter of two of the nicest people you could hope to meet, LaVern D. Green and his lovely wife, Ada Birch. The couple had longed for children, and on February 23, 1935, Ada gave birth. And though the local paper reported that it was a boy, the baby in Ada's loving arms was most definitely a girl, one with dark curls and emerald eyes. They named her JoAnn after a little girl who had charmed her father during his mission for the LDS church in South Africa.

JoAnn blossomed in the fertile ground of the Green home. She was taught elocution and general refinement by her mother and enjoyed countless childhood adventures with her cousin, Colleen Fairbanks. She had a natural interest in the arts, and like her father, learned to sketch and paint. But JoAnn was too lively to stay cloistered with pots of paint for long. What she wanted was to be on stage, and during her time at Provo High School—when she was cheering for the Bulldogs—she was acting, dancing, and singing in various high school performances.

Her life was busy, but never so much so that she lost sight of what mattered most, and from an early age she took the time to get to know her Savior, Jesus Christ. She was consistent in attending church with her family, a family that, when she was fifteen, welcomed a baby boy named James—a little brother she adored, but not so much that it brought her social life to a screeching halt.



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However, when she wasn't gallivanting across Provo, she loved spending time with James, who had a way of saying the most hilarious things.

After high school, JoAnn attended Brigham Young University. It was there at the tender age of nineteen that she met Gary Hatch, a handsome young man from Mexico who would serenade her with his mariachi compadres. This would prove a pivotal encounter. Gary and JoAnn fell in love, married, and moved to Texas for dental school. Did JoAnn complain about being plucked from her Eden-like home? No. This shift in her world brought to the surface certain attributes that perhaps until then had not been fully revealed—her adaptability, and an ability to look on the bright side.

Letters between her parents and herself were frequent, particularly as Gary and JoAnn started welcoming children into their home: first Gary and Kevin in Texas, then Lucy in Minnesota. By the time Lisa appeared on the scene, they had settled in Arizona, where they would continue to live as they raised their family and added to it the ever-adorable Jason, and the cherry on top of her life: Laura.

With six children, JoAnn poured herself into raising her family, doing so with kindness, faith, and an uncomplicated love. Her children didn't have to fight for her love. Just like her lovely smile, she gave it to them freely, blessing them in innumerable ways.

When life threw her curveballs, that ability to pivot came in handy. She was never morose, never glum. She knew that her Savior could give her, as promised, "beauty for ashes," but she assumed she had to roll up her sleeves and help the process along. Returning to college when Jason and Laura were still little, she earned an education degree from Arizona State University, graduating with honors as a member of Phi Kappa Phi. Education was a perfect fit for her, as she was a talented teacher, capable of keeping the attention of children with her pleasant personality and endless creativity.

Life seemed mapped out for JoAnn. Arizona was her home and grandchildren her jam, but when Gary unexpectedly died of a heart attack, that ability to adapt again rose to the surface. Widowed, she began working full time and was blessed to be able to call her oldest son, Gary, her boss. At ATCI, Gary's company, she found new challenges, new friends, and across the breezeway, a man with whom she would fall in love.



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Bill Stephens, to most, was just a soft-spoken accountant, but JoAnn saw something more, and it wasn't long before the two were happily married. Together, they enjoyed life. It became sweeter with the other close by. And that uncomplicated love of hers she offered to Bill's six children: Heather, Holly, Kari, Wendy, Wade, and Kristina. She was interested in their lives, adored being Grama Nana to their children, and loved being counted as a Stephens.

In time, Bill and JoAnn moved to Utah, settling in Alpine. There, in retirement, they thrived, working together in the temple, going on drives up the canyon. Life was as sweet as the locally grown peaches, and they wished it could go on that way forever. But in time, age made its presence known, and though JoAnn's curiosity and keen intellect never dimmed, her body would not comply.

She did "not go gentle into that good night." Loving the life she'd created with Bill, and more specifically loving Bill, she wanted to stay and tried every measure she could to do so, but according to her daughter who was with her on her final night, sometime in the twilight hours, her soul sat up, assessed the situation, and determined that it was time to go. And so she did, leaving us all wishing we'd had more time with her, but oh so grateful for the time we did.

JoAnn is survived by her loving husband, Bill Stephens; six children; six stepchildren; numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren—all happy recipients of the two-dollar bills she would send tucked inside birthday cards.

We will be remembering JoAnn and celebrating her life on September 6 at 890 N Heritage Hills Dr. Alpine, Utah. Viewing will take place from 9:30–10:30 a.m., with the funeral following at 11:00 a.m.

Flowers can delivered to the church starting at 8:30 am on Saturday.




Events


JoAnn Green Stephens

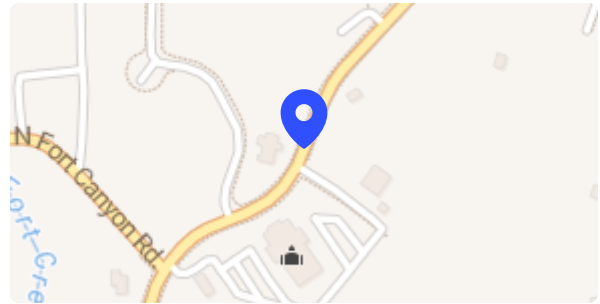
FEB 23, 1935 - AUG 26, 2025

Viewing

 **Saturday**, September 6, 2025

 9:30 AM - 10:30 AM MT


 **LDS Church**
890 N Heritage Hills Dr. , Alpine UT 84004

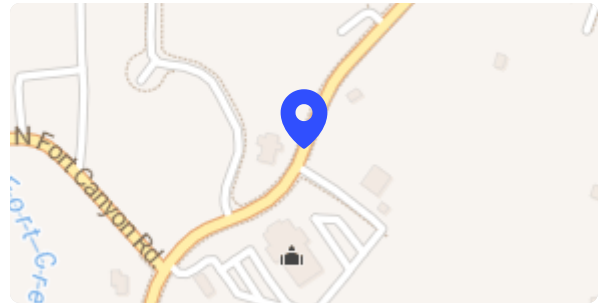


Funeral Service


 **Saturday**, September 6, 2025

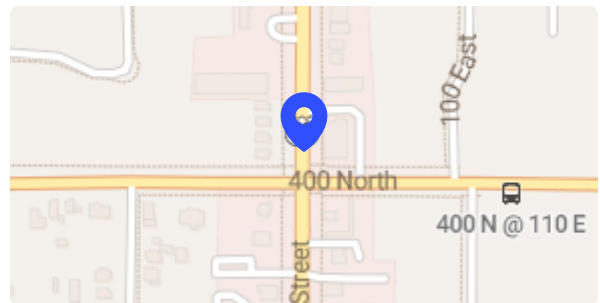
 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM MT

 **LDS Church**
890 N Heritage Hills Dr. , Alpine UT 84004



Cemetery Details

 **Provo City Cemetery**
610 South State Street, Provo AK 00000





Tribute Wall

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Barbara B Bradley posted:

My Aunt Ada was a beautiful person to me; as was Jo Ann, my first cousin. I relied on her to keep me up on genealogy . My family and I send our love to Jo Ann's family. Barbara Birch Bradley

September 4 at 8:34 AM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring JoAnn by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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