



## (Mathilda) Ann Graven

March 29, 1940 - April 28, 2023

(Mathilda) Ann Graven, 83, of Greene, Iowa, passed away on April 28, 2023 after suffering complications from a stroke.

Ann was born on March 29, 1940 to Nellie Rachel (Walter) Benz and Dr. Frederick Wilhelm Benz in Manchester, Iowa. She was the oldest of four daughters; this tight group of female siblings would become affectionately known as “the Benz girls” to both family and friends alike. As the oldest of her siblings, Ann took on additional responsibilities when their father suddenly died of a heart attack when she was just 13 years old. Their mom told the other girls that “If I’m not around and you are ever in need, Ann will always be there to help.” Ann lived up to her mother’s promise and she later developed into the Benz family matriarch - always offering support in time of need to both her sisters and their children. Ann graduated from Quasqueton High School in 1957. She attended her first two years of college at Mount Mercy College in Cedar Rapids, Iowa and then

transferred to the University of Iowa where she obtained both a bachelors of arts degree and a certification in medical technology in 1962. She was proud to be a lifelong Hawkeye fan and she developed very close friendships during college that would remain important to her throughout her entire life.

It was at the University of Iowa that she met and then fell in love with Norman Reuben Graven.

After graduating Ann was employed by the VA hospital in Iowa City while Norman finished law school. They were married at St. John's Catholic Church in Independence, Iowa on July 11, 1964.

That same year Ann and Norm bought their only home at 324 South Main Street in Greene, Iowa, where they would raise all three children and where Ann would live the next 60 years of her life.

Ann first worked for Salsbury Labs in Charles City, Iowa but soon decided to forgo her career to focus her energy on raising their children. In 1983 she re-entered the workforce as a medical technologist for the medical clinic in Allison, Iowa where she bonded well with the staff and loved the patients. She worked there until 1999 when she departed the workforce again and spent quality time with Norman during his illness. After Norm's death in the fall of 2000 she poured her energy, her heart and her soul into her children and grandchildren and was a constant source of love, encouragement and praise in their lives.

In her free time she could often be found in the stands at a wide variety of ball games and activities for her children and, later, her grandchildren. If something or someone needed to be celebrated, Ann was there to host the party. Ann loved to entertain a wide assortment of family, neighbors and good friends at her home; she hosted countless bridge parties, bridal and baby showers, anniversary parties, family holidays and birthday celebrations. She was known to play a competitive game of bridge and she enjoyed a wide variety of travels with Norman and with other family members and friends. In 1983 she and Norman purchased their family cabin in Clear Lake, Iowa. Ann purposefully made this cabin a relaxing destination which would become the foundation for numerous lakeside memories for children, grandchildren and any friends they invited along. She leaves behind great memories of the “dock talks” she would have with others - often early in the morning or as the sun was setting.

Ann was known to be a big cheerleader of her children’s spouses and would often be chided by her children that she liked the in-laws better. Ann had rock-solid faith which she often credited for getting her through the premature deaths of both her father and her husband. She was a faithful Catholic who loved going to mass on Sunday mornings regardless of where

she was or who she was with. Ann was a devoted “prayer warrior” in the lives of countless people. When someone brought up a challenging event or hardship she would frequently encourage them to trust in Jesus and to take everything to God in prayer; she said this because it came from the conviction of the power of prayer in her own life.

Ann was predeceased by her beloved husband of 36 years, Norman R. Graven, her parents Nellie R. and Dr. Frederick W. Benz, and a half-brother Frederick “Skip” Benz. She is survived by her three children: Kristin Elise (Ron) Bode of Ankeny, Iowa, Kurt Norman (Tina) Graven of Greene, Iowa and Mara Ann (Paul) Brooks of Fitchburg, Wisconsin. She is also survived by her six grandchildren: Rachel Elise (Luke) Denton, Dalton James (Emma) Graven, Erin Deann Bode, Taylor Elizabeth Graven, Carson Robert Graven and Karl Reuben Brooks and two great-grandchildren: River Elaine Denton and Sawyer Louise Graven. She also leaves behind the three remaining “Benz girls” and their spouses: Bea (Sam) Heffernen, Christy (Tom) Grapes and Corinne (Orlan) Love and her six nephews.

Visitation will be held on Thursday May 4 at the Counsell Woodley Funeral Home in Greene from 5-7 pm with a rosary at 7:00 pm. A funeral mass will be held at St. Mary Catholic Church at 10:30

AM on Friday May 5 with graveside burial and a church luncheon to follow. In lieu of flowers, the

family requests memorial donations be made to any of the following entities:

St. Mary Catholic

Church, St. Croix Hospice, Quasqueton Area Historical Society or the Greene Public Library.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

MAY 4. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Greene - Woodley Funeral Home  
519 N 1St St  
Greene, IA 50636  
(641) 823-4457

## Rosary

MAY 4. 7:00 PM - 7:30 PM (CT)

Greene - Woodley Funeral Home  
519 N 1St St  
Greene, IA 50636  
(641) 823-4457

## Service

MAY 5. 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM (CT)

St. Mary Catholic Church  
Main Street  
Greene, IA 50636

# Tribute Wall



“ I always remember the big smile and laughter of Ann! And her wonderful support of her children. Please accept my sympathies.  
*Fred J Jaeger, DDS*

Fred Jaeger - May 03, 2023 at 10:42 PM



“ *Medium Dish Garden was purchased for the family of (Mathilda) Ann Graven.*



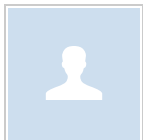
May 02, 2023 at 08:31 PM



“ *Small Garden Dish was purchased for the family of (Mathilda) Ann Graven.*



May 02, 2023 at 11:46 AM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of (Mathilda) Ann Graven.*



May 02, 2023 at 09:37 AM



“ *Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of (Mathilda) Ann Graven.*



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May 01, 2023 at 10:58 AM



“ *Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of (Mathilda) Ann Graven.*



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May 01, 2023 at 09:50 AM



“ *Basket Full of Wishes was purchased for the family of (Mathilda) Ann Graven.*



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May 01, 2023 at 08:47 AM



“ *Our condolences to the Benz and Graven families. It is difficult to process the loss of Ann. Although we didn't see each other often in these later years she was as always a special friend and cousin to me. We went to school together, played basketball together and on one of our moves to Colorado, Ann went with us for a couple weeks We plan to attend the service on Friday, along with my brother. Kudos to the writer(s) of the obituary. Aunt Nellie would be pleased.*

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**Shari and Lyle Andersen** - April 30, 2023 at 07:43 PM



“ *Deepest sympathy to the Graven Family -- Ann was a wonderful woman. The entire Merfeld Family ( Rita, Mike, Theresa, Dave and families ).*

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**Theresa Vickery** - April 30, 2023 at 04:49 PM

RF

“ *Rita Merfeld and Family purchased the Country Basket Blooms for the family of (Mathilda) Ann Graven.*



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**Rita Merfeld and Family** - April 30, 2023 at 04:47 PM

BB

“ *Oh, Annie, your laughter from downstairs, whether your house or Mom and Dad's on the farm, while we kids were upstairs seeing what kind of mischief we could get into, will long be a wonderful memory for me. You were such a strong and powerful presence in my growing-up days. My love and hugs to Kristin, Kurt and Mara! Bitsy*

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**Bitsy Barth** - April 30, 2023 at 03:36 PM