



Juana "Juanita" Carreon

December 31, 1919 - April 17, 2020

Juana (Juanita) Carreon Hernandez was born in Monterrey, Mexico on December 31, 1919 to Maximino Hernandez and Maria Ynes Rodriguez. She was the fourth of five children and eventually outlived her four siblings: Alejandro Hernandez, Beatriz Hernandez, Emilia (Garza) Hernandez, and Maximino Hernandez Jr. She and her siblings were raised by her father's sister, Elenita Hernandez, since Juanita's own mother passed away when she was two. Later, when she had her own family, Juanita would bring Elenita to live with her and provide a home for her for most of the remainder of her life.

Juanita liked to recount that when she was young, she thought 30 was old! Never did she expect to live to be 100. During her young adulthood in Mexico, she worked in various factories, where she was active in workers organizations and athletic pursuits. She was a member of various women's groups in her workplaces, where she participated in company demonstrations and strikes. She was the catcher for her softball team and famously lost her front teeth when a player flung a baseball bat during play. As captain of the volleyball team, she led them to many victories. Juanita was very popular and had many boyfriends in this season of her life. But when one of them had the audacity to leave her at the altar, she feared she was on the way to becoming "an old maid", and set out to meet a proper husband through a correspondence service.

In 1954, Juanita journeyed to Chicago, IL to marry Gregory M. Carreon, a Ford Motor Co. factory worker, relocating to Detroit, MI shortly thereafter. The following year, in 1955, she had a daughter, Maria Dolores (Ploof), and five years later, a son, Cesar Julio. While living in the U.S., Juanita continued to work in various factories, including one where she sewed parachutes for a military supplier. She never learned to drive, but was still fiercely independent, navigating the city of Detroit on foot and by bus, walking many miles a day. In the 1960s and '70s, the family would make annual trips back to Mexico to spend the summer with relatives, always being sure to bring a toaster or other small appliance for border officials to ensure a smooth transit. Although she loved her homeland, Juanita made Detroit her permanent residence. Even into her 90s, she could be found mowing the lawn, raking the leaves, and shoveling the snow in front of her home.

When her first grandchild, Michael Ploof, was born in 1986, Juanita took delight in frequently taking care of him over several years while his parents, Maria and Charles were working. In 1992, her second grandson, David Ploof, brought added joy. She was a lover of animals as well as children, owning many cats (usually Siamese) and dogs in her lifetime, and had a green thumb, growing roses, tomatoes, and even corn stalks in the tiny patch of backyard behind her Detroit duplex home. She was adept at many crafts, and enjoyed sewing, embroidery, and crochet, often producing multiple throw blankets per year. When her eyesight began to fail, she enjoyed playing bingo and going on outings with other seniors at the Patton Park Community Center.

Juanita thought she was old when she turned 30, she thought she was really old when she turned 80, she never thought she'd make it to 90, but somehow, she managed to experience 100 years on this earth. She leaves behind many loving relatives in Mexico and the U.S., as well as a lifetime of memories.

A memorial Mass will be held on Thursday, July 8, 2021 at the Basilica of Ste.

Anne in Detroit at 10:00 am. Friends and family may visit at the church prior to the service. Interment will follow at Woodmere Cemetery in Detroit. In lieu of flowers, the family requests memorials be made to the Michigan Humane Society.

Cemetery Details

Woodmere Cemetery

9400 W. Fort Street
Detroit, MI 48209

Previous Events

Memorial Mass

JUL 8. 10:00 AM (ET)

Basilica of Ste. Anne de Detroit
1000 Sainte Anne Street
Detroit, MI 48216

Tribute Wall

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“ *Loli and Cesar, my sincere condolences for the loss of your mother. My good thoughts and prayers are with you all.*

Growing up, I remember your mom being such a strong, hard working, independent woman raising two children. She was always so kind and friendly. May she rest in peace and may perpetual light shine upon her.

Irma Saldivar - April 23, 2020 at 12:12 AM