



HARPSWELL — Joyanne Jewett Johnson of Harpswell passed away on Saturday, August 6, at Mid Coast Hospital's Bodwell Hospice Facility in Brunswick. She was in the presence of her loving family.

She was diagnosed with Pancreatic Cancer in late March. Facing her foe with grace, courage, and dignity, she spent the last four and half months battling this implacable disease. She forsook the traditional chemo therapy protocol and sought treatment in Japan where she spent a month undergoing regimen of immune and gene therapies at the Saisei Mirai Clinic in Kyoto. She achieved temporary relief, but the complications of the disease soon continued their inexorable march. The family wishes to thank the entire team at Mid Coast – Parkview Health, especially at the

Bodwell Center and Hospice Care Facility, for their caring professionalism and comforting compassion as well as the team at New England Cancer Specialists. We also want to thank Dr. Toshio Inui and his team at the Saisei Mirai Clinic along with her ND, Dr. Frederic Shotz, who provided immeasurable support and helped her find Dr. Inui.

Joy was born in Castine, Maine June 17, 1946, and grew up in Bucksport. She was the daughter of George Hebert Jewett and Ellen Louise Randall Jewett who both pre-deceased her. She attended local schools in Bucksport. In 1968 she graduated from the University of Maine With Distinction earning a B.A. degree in Sociology. She was a member of Phi Mu Sorority, Secretary of the Student Senate, a Varsity Cheerleader, and an All Maine Woman. After graduation, she remained active with the Class of '68. Since returning to Maine in 2004, she has been very active in Class and Alumni activities coordinating and hosting numerous alumni events, including many in the barn on Snow Ridge Farm which was the salt water farm where she lived with her husband, animals, and gardens. It was here that her two daughters and all her grandchildren spent each summer with her.

She became an avid fly-fisher and spent a good deal of time on most of Maine's best cold water fishing venues with her husband, family, and friends. There were both canoe and drift boat trips on the West Branch, drift boat trips on the East Outlet, annual family visits to Grand Lake Stream and the St. Croix River, and trips to the Kennebago, Magalloway, and Rapid Rivers

At the beginning of her sophomore year, she met her future husband, Gregory G. Johnson of Westmanland, Maine. Following a three year courtship, they were married on July 6, 1968. She commenced a short-lived employment working for the State of Maine Department of Health and Human Services as a Social Worker while her husband entered Aviation Officer Candidate School and was commissioned in February, 1969.

She then began a 36 year run of the nomadic life associated with being part of a military family. During the first 25 years her husband was deployed over 2/3 of the time which meant during that period she was more often than not a “single parent”. She was a loved and caring mother to her two daughters, Sydney Randall Johnson Mroweic and Ashley Em Johnson Techet. From 1978 to 1990, the family was fortunate to reside in Jacksonville, FL in the same house, on the same street, belonging to the same church, enjoying the continuity of the same friends, classmates, and neighborhood. For a significant majority of those 12 years she was a “single parent” and she worked hard to make life exciting and interesting for her daughters. She had the capacity to turn activities into great adventures. There were numerous trips to Cumberland Island, tubing on the Ichetucknee, visits to the Okefenokee Wilderness, class trips to Washington, D.C., and summers with her daughters at Skyland Camp in Clyde, NC. It was also during this period that she began to perfect the tradition of turning every birthday party, social event, and milestone occasion into something special. She was the master of memorable parties which continued to her last days when she organized with her daughters’ help a memorable co- 70th Birthday Party for herself and husband which she shared with their family and friends.

In addition to being a loving and supportive mother and spouse, she always found ways to establish her own identity. She found interesting employment wherever we lived; founded a business, Canvas Cutters, which she could take with her whenever she moved; served for several years as Director of Arts and Crafts at a girl’s summer camp near Clyde, NC; and always found ways and time to help those whose lives were more cluttered and complicated than the life she enjoyed.

During the last 1/3 of those 36 years as a Navy Spouse, the assignments included time on large senior staffs or command of large U.S. and NATO staffs with demanding social, entertainment, and cultural responsibilities. Her creative talents came to the fore. She was an elegant and gracious hostess. A Joy hosted event was always one where the guests enjoyed themselves, had fun, and went home with fond memories.

In addition to her family, her abiding legacy will be the work she did throughout her life helping those facing difficulties. She possessed a unique trait that many aspire to but few genuinely achieve – the ability to be truly non-judgmental and totally unconditional in providing care and support. That is what made her so effective working with those in need. Her genuinely caring demeanor resulted in an immediate and deep trust.

To begin, throughout the 36 year Navy odyssey, she was supportive of and often an active volunteer with the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society wherever the family was assigned.

During the family’s last assignment in Jacksonville in the late 1980s, she began working for Downtown Ecumenical Services Council (DESC) providing emergency food, clothing, and financial assistance to people in need. She was fearless in getting out and about to provide those services to the needy populations in and amongst the most

difficult neighborhoods in downtown Jacksonville and greater Duval County. While working for DESC, she also participated in the Fall 1989 March for the Homeless in Washington D.C.

In the 1990s during her husband's last two assignments in the Pentagon (1990 – 1994 and 1997 – 2000), she did two stints with the Fairfax County Department of Health and Human Services. The initial period was during the height of the HIV-AIDS epidemic. She worked closely with this population which was often abandoned by families and suffered lonely, agonizing illnesses and ultimately death in public facilities. On her own time she would spend countless hours attempting to reunite the remains of deceased AIDS/HIV clients with their estranged families. She also worked diligently with the shut-in and alone elderly to make sure they had adequate services and support.

The last four years of the Navy journey was spent in Italy. There she became involved with several charities supporting orphans and those suffering from drug addiction. One of the first was "EXODUS" which was a live-in drug rehabilitation center near Monte Cassino north of Naples. During those four years she worked continuously to support EXODUS as an institution as well as the individual patients. She invited them to her residence, arranged visits on aircraft carriers during port visits in Naples, had the EXODUS "Jimmy Buffet Band" perform at official functions at her residence, and annually treated them to a fully volunteer catered U.S. style Thanksgiving Day Meal. She left an abiding legacy at EXODUS.

Another effort was focused on the "Centro Laila" Orphanage in Mondragone. Most of these children were the abandoned offspring of African refugees and immigrants who worked as prostitutes. Their prospects of being adopted were very remote. She helped raise funds, organized volunteer working parties, visited frequently, and made sure the orphans had a front row seat at the annual Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony at the NATO Headquarters Compound along with an individual gift for each child.

After returning home to Maine in the Fall 2004, her selfless efforts to assist community organizations and those in need found new and wonderful entities to support. For three years she coordinated amongst the various organizations and businesses that provided the evening meal at Tedford Shelter in Brunswick. That adds up to over 1000 dinners. Of course, she was the provider of last resort should someone forget or otherwise miss a commitment. Her freezer was always stocked with extra pans of lasagna to rush over to the Shelter at the last minute.

She was a member of the Mid Coast Hospital Auxiliary and for three years chaired the Annual Yard Sale. This was a major undertaking. She loved the special group of folks with whom she worked. Under her leadership it truly became a labor of love and great fun while each year raising very substantive funds to support Mid Coast Hospital and the residents it serves within its catchment area.

Her final quest to help others began five years ago. She single – handedly conceived the vision for and founded Embrace A Vet (EAV), a 501©3 dedicated to providing direct and supportive services to Maine veterans and their families living with Post Traumatic Stress (PTS) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) . It has three lines of services – healing and wellness retreats, Paws for Peace which provides service dogs, and caregiver support programs. She served as its Executive Director the past five years until her death. It was her fervent hope that the wonderful work of the EAV Team will continue and be her enduring legacy.

She is survived by her husband of 48 years, Admiral Gregory G. Johnson, USN-Ret. and their two daughters, Sydney Randall Johnson Mrowiec and Ashley Em Johnson Techet; her mother in law, Carolyn Warren Peterson Johnson; two aunts, Flora Morgan Randall Crosson and Nancy Jewett Lord; an uncle, Ralph Joseph Jewett; two sons-in-law David Bradley Mroweic and Andrew Holden Techet; and five grandchildren, Warren Bradley Mroweic, Gregory Holden Techet, Owen Andrew Techet, Soren William Techet, and Emma Scout Techet.

A Memorial Service and Celebration of Joy's Life is planned for 11:00AM, Friday, August 26, at First Parish Church in Brunswick, Maine. A reception will follow in The Barn at Snow Ridge Farm, 69 Shore Road, Harpswell, ME 04079.

In lieu of flowers, please consider donations in Joy's memory to: 1.) Embrace A Vet, [www.embraceavet.org](http://www.embraceavet.org) or P.O. Box 516, Topsham, ME 04086; 2.) Joyanne Jewett Johnson Scholarship Fund, payable to the University of Maine Foundation, Two Alumni Place, Orono, ME 04469 or <http://umainefoundation.org/about-the-foundation/memorial/>; or 3.) Clergy Spiritual Enrichment Fund, First Parish Church, 9 Cleaveland Street, Brunswick, ME 04011.