



Julia "Jo" Howard

June 7, 1939 - September 30, 2023

No obituary found for this tribute.

Tribute Wall

JB

“ 2 files added to the tribute wall



Jason Brazle - April 28, 2025 at 03:52 PM

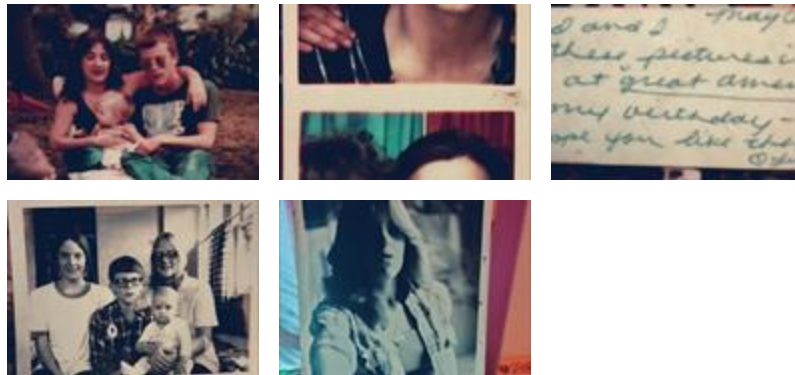
JB

Pictures by Greg Bramhall

Jason Brazle - April 28, 2025 at 03:54 PM

JB

“ 10 files added to the tribute wall



Jason Brazle - April 28, 2025 at 07:44 AM

LD

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Lisa Davis - October 16, 2023 at 04:49 PM

LD

“ 8 files added to the tribute wall



Lisa Davis - October 15, 2023 at 06:24 PM

“*Joanne Marie Bramhall (AKA Julia B Howard) was born June 7th, 1939 to Helen and Larry Bramhall in Rockford, Illinois. Diagnosed with polio at just two years old her parents put their life savings into her treatment at the Mayo clinic and after countless surgeries the only visible trace of the disease was her size 5 1/2 left foot compared to her size 7 1/2 right foot.*

A fighter was born.

Jo, as she was affectionately known by her oldest friends, enjoyed her childhood, playing with cousins and cooking with her mother; going to the local Presbyterian Church, and walking to the library. She was an only child until she was 13 years old when her brother Greg was born and made her life better in every way with his mischievous smile and skill as a photographer. Jo dreamed of being a librarian, but instead traveled to Chicago where she went to secretarial school to learn shorthand, and dictation. It was while living with girlfriends in Chicago that she met her future and only husband, Hal Howard at a Great Books Club.

They welcomed a son in the mid 60's, David Gregory, and then a daughter, Lisa Marie, shortly after. During the summertime, Jo packed Lisa onto her bike in the front and David in the back, and they would go down to Lake Michigan where the kids played in the sand and surf below Sear's Tower. Winter time found them building snow forts and sledding along their street with friends. Weekends were for toll road trips to see the Grandparents and Made Right Burgers or visits to our beloved Larson family in Rockton.

The end of the 60's was a tumultuous time of change and after an amicable divorce, Jo began one of many road trips (with 8 track tapes of The Beatles, Cat Stevens, Grateful Dead, Joan Baez, Fleetwood Mac and John Denver) in the Volvo between Chicago and California, following her younger brother to the epic Central Coast and the Santa Cruz mountains that she loved.

The next 50 years would see Jo change her name to Julia and she would eventually live in a dozen different towns, from Los Gatos, Cupertino, Santa Cruz, Oakland, East Oakland, Berkeley, Alameda, Grass Valley, Concord, Vallejo, Susanville and finally, the Wenatchee Valley, in Washington state. She was always seeking a

better place, a sense of community and stability. Bipolar disorder is like that. She persevered.

As a single mom, Julia worked as a legal secretary, starting from a manual typewriter, dictation and shorthand, to electric typewriters with erasing ribbon, a massive desktop PC, to her own laptop and printer combo. She was further tormented by technology from once having a switchboard, to a rotary phone, push button phone, answering machine, cordless phone, and then flip phones to iPhones. We will miss her calls where she thought she was still dialing, and the accidental voicemails that caught her muttering to herself how much she hated her phone.

She traveled by the EL train in Chicago and the BART train in the Bay Area and San Francisco. She continued to drive a manual stick shift throughout her life, even six months after her knee replacement. She claimed she “didn’t know how to drive an automatic.” Many people came forward to thank us when we took her car away this Summer, but she never forgave us for that, leaving us a nasty note in her safe deposit box. She absolutely wanted the last word on that.

Her personal history encompassed the end of prohibition to the era of WW II; the 50’s Cold War and Civil Rights movement; the reefer madness, and hippie era of the 60’s, Womens Liberation, the Vietnam war, and Peace Rallies where she welcomed activists to sleep on her floor. The 70’s brought communal living, music night, coffee houses, art fairs, hot tubs, equality protests, animal cruelty protests...and anything else for the rights of others and her beloved animals. She voted in every election. She was politically and socially aware and active.

A renter for most of her life, the last 30 years she would own her own homes in California and Washington. While she worked hard to provide for her children and herself, her former husband, Hal, was never far behind and always supportive, remaining her close friend, and co-parent until he passed in 2013. Watching a final Niners game together, she said wistfully, “if I hadn’t been so stubborn, I could’ve been married for 50 years.” But, as we all know, they loved each other better as friends.

Julia found solace from the stress of living alone within a church

family and when she moved to Wenatchee in 2010, she would join several different churches. She eventually found her home with the Celebration Lutheran church, in East Wenatchee.

While cleaning out her fridge, I asked her why she had walnuts since she couldn't eat nuts and she said it was to make treats for the church social.

She was sweet like that.

Julia loved being active after retiring and volunteered with a Susanville prison program that matched stray animals with inmates and was very fulfilled by that endeavor. She also volunteered at Banner Lassen hospital gift shop, and the Humane Society, and sang with the senior singers locally. She enjoyed being a member of Eastmont Worx and Easy Line. She would have volunteered more but found the public peculiar and annoying.

Not having pursued a college degree as she had planned, Julia often told her children that their education was the most important gift that they could give themselves...to be well-read; to be able to have a conversation with a person of any walk of life on any subject; to value the opinion of others and take your time to listen to their views. Ironically, she was also one of the most critical people most of us ever knew. Stubborn and fiercely independent, as well as deeply loyal to her beliefs. You could tell by the tone of her voice that the fight was on.

But in reality, no one survives 43 years fighting cancer without some sass. You can't have a warrior mindset without being willing to stand your ground.

There was never a time that she didn't have at least one cat (or 5 plus a dog when she moved in with her family in WA temporarily!) sometimes adopting them from shelters, the street and occasionally from neighbors that she didn't like.

Her pride and joy were her grandchildren, Ellie Marie and Braden Michael. She loved to watch them perform, compete and grow. She shared her love of music, theater, movies and books with them and loved visiting with them, enjoying lunches and dinners out together. Grandma Julia celebrated every holiday and valued remembering a friend with a card. We will miss her newspaper clippings.

She loved to cook and enjoyed family dinners, potlucks, new

restaurants and old favorites. She was the original foody and she passed that along to her children and grandchildren.

Julia "Jo" Howard was often described as having a fighting spirit, with an unmatched will to survive 8 different cancer surgeries, from having the genetic mutation, Lynch Syndrome.

When I asked how she dealt with these diagnoses and moved forward, she said she "always believed that she would beat it." She never doubted that she would live longer than the final 6 months her oncologist gave her in April. She told her doctor that cancer was as much a mental and emotional disease as it was physical.

Up until the very last weeks of her life, she believed that she would beat it, once again. And, so did we.

Julia was preceded in death by her Mother Helen, Father Larry, Brother Greg, Son David and her Grandson Joseph Michael. She is survived by her daughter, Lisa (and Mike Davis), Granddaughter Ellie, and Grandson Braden, all of East Wenatchee; Sister-In-Law Robin (Brazle) Davis of Beach Park, Illinois and Cousin Helen Johnson of Ashland, KY.

In lieu of flowers, Julia requested donations be made to Lassen Humane Society or Wenatchee Valley Humane Society.

A celebration of life will be held privately.

The family would like to express our deepest gratitude and appreciation for Confluence Hospice for their guidance, kindness and care throughout the past six weeks as well as the Oncology and Palliative Care department that provided support for the past six months. Also, to the Highgate Assisted Living administration, care team and support staff that provided for her needs during the final stages of her life. Additionally, our thanks to her church family at Celebration Lutheran for their companionship, generosity and support that made her transition peaceful on a spiritual level.

Finally, thank you to our friends and extended family for supporting Julia as well as our family throughout this challenging time.

We will forever be grateful for the grace and peace with which she passed.

(And, true to her nature, she did so before she would have to pay for another full month of care because just as she lived, she was going to choose her time, by her own terms, and not leave any debt

unpaid.)



Lisa Davis - October 15, 2023 at 06:21 PM

TJ

Absolutely beautifully describes this lovely, wonderful woman. Rest now, Julia.

Terry Johns - October 15, 2023 at 08:00 PM



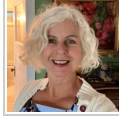
What a wonderful read, an amazing life story this is

Roland Westgate - October 15, 2023 at 08:29 PM

MF

It was truly a treat to know Julia. We were fortunate to have been touched by her friendship at Celebration Lutheran. She will be missed.

Marcia Fall - October 15, 2023 at 11:48 PM



Julia/Joanne was not only my best friend's mother growing up, she, too, was my friend. Julia always had an open heart and open door for me. Some of the many memories that come to mind include our road trip to visit Lisa in Chico, sleepovers with Lisa in Concord with Julia brewing us a strong cup in the morning, going to breakfast/coffee in Benecia, visits in Susanville, I could go on...lastly, I am so very honored to have spent time with Julia this past August when Lisa arranged a special trip with her, Ellie, and Braden to Santa Cruz for an amazing and elegant stay in Capitola. Fun in the sun, complete with a tour of national historical state parks/ beach, laughter, deep talks, good food, strong coffee and lots of love ❤️

This special trip was arranged as part of Julia's bucket list...Lisa granted each one of these wishes and more.

RIP sweet Julia/ Joanne. Thanks for all your love 💕

Loraine Hart - October 19, 2023 at 09:38 PM

JB

I remember you guys. I visited your house on Hillegass St. in Berkeley a few times when I was in the Navy. My brother Dennis, his girlfriend rainbow (Rebecca) and my sister Robin and husband Greg lived there or in the area as well. Used to hang with them all in Rockford Illinois at Larry's house on Hovey before they moved to Cali and I joined the Navy. Those were some fun times great memories for sure!! Anyway I was just thinking about all of you the other day. My sister told me about David a few years ago, sorry for your loss, I remember he was a good bass player. Sorry for the loss of your mother she was awesome!! I have som pics of you guys see if I can find and post. Love always, Jason Brazle.

Jason Brazle - April 28, 2025 at 06:44 AM