



Maria Gernitis

May 25, 1949 - January 26, 2019

GERNITIS (nee McCoy), Maria – 69, of Cape May and West Milford, NJ, formerly of Belleville, NJ, passed away peacefully on Saturday morning, January 26, 2019 in the comfort of her home. Maria graduated from Belleville High School and later graduated from William Paterson University, earning her Bachelor's Degree in Education. She began her teaching career as a physical education teacher in Clifton, NJ; thereafter enjoyed a 15-year hiatus to be at home and raise her two sons before returning to her education career at Yantacaw Elementary School in Nutley, NJ where she worked for 17 years before retiring to Cape May. Maria and Jeff are co-owners of two of Cape May's favorite destinations, the Peter Shields Inn and Fins Bar & Grille.

Maria was a forever loving wife and caring and patient mother. She was a devoted sister who bookended her life with these cherished relationships. As a child, she was a tomboy and spent the first half of her life playing sports then teaching sports to children.

After injury, she adapted to pursue things her body allowed, including reading and gardening. She transitioned from Phys Ed teacher to elementary school librarian. She loved reading to the youngest children then, as they grew, helping them understand how important reading would be to whatever they wanted to pursue in life.

Sickness ended her career, but that also allowed her and her husband Jeff to spend more time in Cape May, NJ. She overcame repeated health issues with her ability to positively frame her situation and her deep personal faith. And this afforded her years at the end of her life to be part of her grandson's early lives.

She was a teacher throughout: with her students, her friends and family, her two sons, and finally her grandsons. Maria is forever loved by her family which includes her husband of 49 years, Jeff Gernitis; two sons, Timothy (and Maren) Gernitis and Mark (and Kim) Gernitis; two grandchildren, Finn and Fitz; three sisters, Kathy, Pat and Ann; as well as nieces, nephews and cousins.

To celebrate Maria, the family has asked that you join them for a celebration of Maria's life, at an open house, Tuesday (Feb. 5th) from 4pm – 8pm at Peter Shields Inn, 1301 Beach Ave., Cape May where your presence will be sincerely appreciated and received as a loving sentiment to honor Maria's life. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions are suggested to: The Seeing Eye, Inc., 10 Washington Valley Rd., Morristown, NJ 07960 or online at: www.theseeingeye.org (Spilker Funeral Home, Cape May) info and condolences: www.spilkerfuneralhome.com

Comments



“ Our deepest sympathy to Jeff and the family from friends at East Lynne Theater Company. Sorry we couldn't be with you at The Peter Shield's Inn on Feb. 5.

Gayle Stahlhuth - February 06 at 10:22 PM



“ Maria called me a week before she passed away to tell me she did not have much longer to live. Before she died she wanted me to know how much she valued our friendship and to thank me for always being there for her. That is who Maria was, always concerned and caring about others. She was a very special lady. I feel blessed to call Maria my friend. My deepest sympathy to Maria's family.

Sharon Reed - February 04 at 01:15 PM



“ Sincere condolences to Jeff and family from friends at the Nature Center of Cape May

Gretchen - January 31 at 11:27 AM



“ My deepest sympathy to you, Jeff, & to Tim, Mark & their families. May beautiful memories of Maria bring you all comfort & peace. Maria & I taught together at Yantacaw School & retired together from Yantacaw School. I have fond memories of our days in Nutley, her outgoing personality, love of gardening, & of course her love of books & teaching. You are all in my prayers as you work through this difficult time.

Pat Fischer

Pat Fischer - January 30 at 04:38 PM



“ I worked with Maria at Yantacaw School during her entire career there. Maria was a warm, generous, and friendly co-worker. She also had a great sense of humor. She shared her love of books with her colleagues in Yantacaw's Book Club. I will always have very fond memories of Maria. My deepest sympathy to her family. Janice Schoem



“ I worked with Maria at Yantacaw School during her time there. She was a friendly and helpful coworker but she also became a friend. She also taught my daughters as their librarian at YS. She even invited us to her beautiful West Milford home and taught them to swim in one afternoon. My daughters still remember that fondly. Sincerest condolences to Maria's family. God bless, Maria.
Sincerely, Pamela Batchelder-Mitchell

Pamela Batchelder-Mitchell - January 30 at 01:41 PM



“ Jeff and family,
Wishing you peace to bring comfort and the courage to face the days ahead and loving memories to forever hold in your hearts. Our most sincere condolences.
Janet and Steve Mozolewski

Janet Mozolewski - January 30 at 12:39 PM



“ Maria was one of the sweetest and gentlest woman whom I had the good fortune of meeting over a decade ago. Never once did I hear her utter an unkind word about another. She was a loving, wife, mother, grandmother and a truly loyal friend. To say, I will miss her is an understatement but I am thankful for the blessing of memory and the ability to recall the many laughs and fun times we shared. Although she has left us too soon, I take solace knowing that she now resides in God's loving kingdom where one day, I hope to resume our friendship.

Karen and Chris Bernhardt



Karen Bernhardt - January 29 at 01:47 PM



“ My condolences to Jeff and their kids. Her obituary brought back a lot of memories. My mother was Theresa Mc Coy before she married Fred Singer. She lived her whole 84 years in Belleville. She grew up on Mill Street with her 5 younger brothers and younger sister Agusta McCoy. I think we might be related. If Maria's parents were Andy and Blossom, we were first cousins.
Jeff, please let know what her parents names were.

I am now 91 and retired from ITT Avionics since 1991.

Fred Singer, Jr.

Fred Singer - January 30 at 03:35 PM



“ Fond memories of Maria. She always would stop and talk to Jim and myself. She would make light of her problems and rather want to discuss our health issues. A hard worker and true friend, just like her husband Jeff. Maria will be missed by many. I send my sympathy to her family. Bob Epaldo.

Robert Epaldo - January 31 at 10:02 AM



“ My deepest sympathy to Jeff and all his family. Maria became librarian at Yantacaw after I went to the Middle School. We often talked about our work, shared ideas and supported one another. I so enjoyed knowing Maria! My support and prayers are with you at this difficult time. Warmly,

Mary Austin

Mary Austin - February 01 at 07:51 PM