



D. Joyce Campanella

July 14, 1928 - April 2, 2013

D. Joyce Campanella, 84, died peacefully in her sleep on April 2, 2013, at the Lebanon Valley Home in Annville, PA, after a long battle with Primary Progressive Aphasia. A former actress, singer, and registered nurse, she was married to the late Philip A. Campanella for 38 years. The daughter of Harold Nenninger and Doris Wadsworth, Joyce was born in Springfield, NJ, on July 14, 1928. She attended Dickinson College in Carlisle when she was only 16 years old, and received her B.S.-R.N. from Columbia University School of Nursing in New York City in 1950. New York would remain Joyce's hometown for the next 20 years, although nursing was not her only calling: At the age of 25, she snuck into a closed audition and launched a brief but impassioned career as an actress, performing under the stage name "Joy Nelson". In the 1950s, she appeared regularly with the Metropolitan Sextet at the notorious Times Square nightclub The Latin Quarter, singing grand opera excerpts sandwiched between a roster of comedy and burlesque acts. A mezzo-soprano, she sang Santuzza in *Cavalleria Rusticana* at the Amato Opera in Greenwich Village, and in 1961 she joined the touring company of Gower Champion's Tony-Award-winning production of *Bye Bye Birdie*. She would remain on the road with the show for three years. Numerous seasons of summer stock at the Brunswick Music Theater followed, including featured roles in *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Oklahoma*, and *Hello Dolly*. A devoted wife and mother, Joyce worked as the school nurse at Fair Lawn Senior High School, in NJ from 1972-1992, where she also served as the director of the annual

musical. Her passion for the performing arts enriched the lives of her students, inspiring many to pursue careers as performers, educators, and theater-makers themselves. She is survived by two daughters: Maria M., wife of Harold L. Wakefield of Harrisburg, and Christina C. Campanella of New York City; two grandchildren, Sarah F. Wakefield and Paul J. Wakefield, and a sister, Avis C. Kessler of Delaplane, Virginia. A memorial service will be held in Annville in May, as well as in the NY/NJ area later this summer.

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Tribute Wall

KC

“*Mrs. Campanella was a wonderful person, dedicated school nurse and an inspiration to many in the musical theater programs at Fair Lawn High School. She touched my life during Bye Bye Birdie & I still have her ladybug pin some 38 years later. Sincere condolences to her family and friends.*

K. Cauwels - April 22, 2013 at 12:00 AM