



Mary Ward

March 30, 2011

Mary Jo Ward, 83, of Mansfield, Texas, passed away March 30, 2011. Jo was born on February 20, 1928 to Jeat and Ola Burkhalter in Throckmorton, Texas. In 1945, Jo moved to New Orleans, Louisiana to work for the National Weather Service where she met co-worker John Smithee Ward, veteran of the 36th Infantry Division of World War II. After a brief courtship, the two married on March 19, 1946. Jo and John welcomed daughter Janis Jo in May 1947 and son Dave Smithee in February 1950. The Wards moved to Fort Worth in 1954, establishing a home in Arlington Heights and a church home at Grace United Methodist Church, where they remained active members for many decades. Jo worked for American General Insurance Company as a secretary in the mortgage loan division for twenty years until her retirement. In 1983, Jo and John relocated to Mansfield, Texas, surrounded by many extended family members and friends. Since 2000, they have been active members of First United Methodist Church in Mansfield, the Wesley Sunday School Class and dedicated volunteers of the Wesley Mission Center. They started each day solving puzzles in the newspaper and looked forward to playing Forty Two on Wednesday afternoons with the Fun Seekers at the church. An enthusiastic fan of the Rangers and Mavericks, she spent much of her time making needlework creations and baking homemade treats. Jo was proud "Granny" to her granddaughters and "Granny Jo" to her great granddaughters. Survivors: Husband of sixty-five years, John Smithee Ward; daughter, Jan Randolph; granddaughters Alyssa Randolph, Brenna Randolph and Arden Ward; great

granddaughters Lauren Pham, Madison Morin, Leila Sojoodi and Norah Sojoodi. Preceded in death by beloved son, Dave Ward and brother, J.R. Burkhalter, Jo was treasured by all who knew her for her cheerful, loving spirit. Memorials: In lieu of flowers, the family suggests donations to the Wesley Sunday School Class or Wesley Mission Center of First United Methodist Church of Mansfield, 777 N. Walnut Creek Drive, Mansfield, TX 76063.

Tribute Wall

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“Denny and I had the privilege of crossing lives with Jo and John Ward while volunteering at the Wesley Mission Center. While many who knew her best as a devoted wife, mother, and grandmother, we knew her as a very special lady, a friend, a wonderful cook, and tenacious like a pit bull to getting those books to Half Price Books every week to bring in revenue for the mission. She would carefully go through each book and examine it to see if it was worthy of selling, and then she would stack them in boxes, and John and others would help her to the car with them. I tried doing them once, and that is not an easy task. Many others have tried and tired. But to Jo, it was her mission and she did it with joy like no one else could do. We will forever remember her as "The Book Lady." Jo was a real inspiration to all who met her, and she was not absent of having a great sense of humor. I'm sure that was also mandatory for sorting through all of those books. Now, if anyone messed with her special chair though, they had better run and hide behind the donation bags. I will never pick up another book without thinking of her sitting behind a stack of books sometimes so tall you could barely see her. She would often bring cookies and candy to the mission and she was a force to be reckoned with as a cook. We loved Jo and will miss her greatly. We will miss her beautiful smile.

Suzanne and Denny Hollandsworth - April 02, 2011 at 06:08 PM