



[TOP](#)

# In Memory of Frances Joanne Pulliam

SEPTEMBER 28TH 2023 BY DEE LOFLIN

## In Memory of Frances Joanne Pulliam

Frances Joanne Pulliam was born on August 21, 1926 on the family farm near Grandview, IA, the fifth of eleven children born to Irma (Schafer) and Glenn Buster. She passed away at her home near Bernie, Mo, on September 26, 2023.

Frances attended Green Valley rural school and was a 1944 graduate of Muscatine High School. She achieved her dream of becoming a Registered Nurse in 1948 when she graduated from St. Mary's School of Nursing in Rochester, MN. She continued her education by attending Drake University and the University of Missouri and proudly served in the U.S. Cadet Nurse Corps during and after WWII.

Frances was married to George Edwin Pulliam for 62 years until his death in 2016. They were the proud parents of a son, Joseph Edwin, daughter-in-law Adaina, and a daughter, Sarah Beth, all of Bernie, MO. She adored her grandchildren, Joe Ryan (Marti) and Adam (Kaleigh) and her great-grandchildren, Katie (Kenny), Allie, Hayden, Hali, and Tucker

Frances' husband often said that she was not happy unless she was helping others and that commitment to service was the center of her personal and professional life. Frances was an active member of the Bernie United Methodist Church, singing in the choir, teaching Sunday School, and participating in the United Methodist Women. In 2017, she was named United Methodist Woman of the Year for the southeast region of Missouri. Frances also served as a Cub Scout and Girl Scout leader and was instrumental in establishing and coordinating the Meals on Wheels Program in Bernie for many years.

She participated in numerous other volunteer activities in the community and was twice named Citizen of the Year in Bernie for her service to the community.

Caring for others as a Registered Nurse always held a special place in Frances' heart. After completing nurse's training and her service in the Cadet Nurse Corps, she worked at hospitals in CO, MN, and IA before moving to Missouri, where she initially worked at the Sikeston Hospital and the VA Hospital in Poplar Bluff. After taking time out to raise her family, she returned to work at the Missouri Delta Community Hospital in Sikeston, retiring as the House Manager many years later. She was an active member of the Missouri Nurses Association and received the Outstanding Member Award for the 8th District in 1989. She was also honored in 2017 with a Missouri House of Representatives Resolution recognizing her lifelong contributions to the profession of nursing.

Frances firmly believed everyone should have the opportunity to access quality health care in their communities and was instrumental in helping to establish the Stoddard County Public Health Center, serving for several years on its Board of Directors. She also served on the Board of Directors for the Dexter Hospital, the Center for Family Resources, and the Stoddard County Mental Health Board. Helping establish a medical and dental clinic in her hometown of Bernie as a member of the SEMO Health Network Board of Directors was one of her proudest achievements and the building is dedicated in her honor.

In addition to her family, faith, nursing, and community work, Frances loved her home on the family farm, always tending to a large vegetable garden and raising beautiful flowers. She could doctor a farm animal as easily as a person and chop cotton, haul hay, and drive a tractor with the best of them. She was well-known for cooking, canning, and preserving every food known to man with her pickles, catsup, juices, and jellies happily devoured by family and friends.

Whether it was delivering a meal, answering a late-night call for nursing assistance in the community, or advocating on Capitol Hill for the health care needs of Southeast Missouri, Frances' genuine compassion for all mankind and her willingness to work for what was right touched many lives. We will be forever grateful for the legacy of love she left to our family and take great comfort in knowing our mothers never really leave us.

Besides her children and grandchildren, Frances is survived by two sisters, Kay Schillig and Iva Marie Buster of Iowa City, IA, and one brother, George Buster, of Winfield, IA. In addition to her husband and parents, she was preceded in death by sisters Allene Forbes, Gla Rolig, Ruth and Glenna Buster, and brothers Donald, Gene, and Larry Buster.

Friends may call at the Mathis Funeral Home in Bernie on Sunday, October 1, 2023 from 5:00 PM until 7:00 PM. Funeral services will be held in the Mathis Funeral Chapel in Bernie on Monday morning, October 2, 2023 starting at 10:00 AM, with Rev. Susan Marner-Sides and Rev. Ron Dunavin officiating. Interment will follow at the Missouri State Veterans Cemetery in Bloomfield, Missouri. Mathis Funeral Home of Bernie is assisting with all arrangements.

Frances would ask that you donate your time to a worthy cause or consider making a memorial gift to:

Stoddard County Meals on Wheels

23 West Stoddard Street

Dexter, MO 63841

Or

Stoddard County Children's Home

P.O. Box 164

Dexter, MO 63841

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