



# Marijane V. Diffley

JUL 12, 1954 - FEB 21, 2025



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## **Marijane V. Diffley**

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**I**t is with profound sadness that we announce the passing of Marijane (Verini) Diffley on February 21, 2025. Marijane was born on Long Island, New York on July 12, 1954, to Raymond and Elayne (Drob) Verini of the Bronx. Marijane's older brother Bob preceded her and remained very close to his younger sister her whole life. The Verini family and extended relatives were a close knit group who lived near each other in Levittown, N.Y. and later in Wheatley Heights. Marijane grew up a social, inquisitive, and playful (bordering on mischievous as she grew older) young girl. She was very close to her cousins Ginger and Joanne, and developed a lifelong friendship with Susan (Sherman) King at a very early age. As a fun-loving and gregarious person, especially at Half Hollow Hills High School (where she was a member of the school's award-winning drill team), Marijane developed other close, permanent friendships with Carol (Stevens) Matasic and Barb (Maida) Rafferty.

Marijane attended Cortland College in upstate N.Y., majoring in Elementary Education. As Marijane and her parents were driving back to Cortland in August 1975, they had a flat tire and pulled off the road to change it. An inebriated baker, coming off an all night shift, plowed into their vehicle, running over Ray and Marijane while throwing Elayne onto the road. That turned out to be the defining event of their lives. Her dad lost his left leg immediately, and Marijane lost hers several days later despite doctors' efforts to save it. "Well, dad," she told him poignantly in a voicemail, "I guess we're going to be twins now." Thanks to the fortitude and the saintlike care and devotion of Elayne, they slowly recovered, using prostheses and eventually resumed their lives. It was at this point that the Sisters of Charity at St. Joseph hospital in New Jersey befriended the Verini family. The Sisters gave Marijane her first relic of Elizabeth Ann Seton, who founded the Sisters of Charity and was about to become the first American-born Saint to be canonized. As a result, Marijane became a devout lifelong devotee of Mother Seton and visited her shrine in Emmitsburg after moving to Maryland.



## Obituary

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Marijane finished college a year later, and then attended Hofstra University, where she earned a Master's Degree in Education (with Distinction). She interned at the Human Resources Center on Long Island, and there her life took another big turn. She met and eventually married the love of her life, Jim Diffley, and they raised (well, she raised them and he shared the credit) three wonderful children. Christopher Raymond was born on September 18, 1984, followed by Larisa Elayne on January 15, 1988, and then Justin Taylor James on December 28, 1993. Marijane and Jim bought a Ranch style house in Commack, N.Y. in 1984, where they raised their three children. Her life over the ensuing years was marked with constant pain, surgeries to back, neck, and right leg, x-rays, MRI's, and more, accompanied by more hospital visits than anyone deserved. Yet that never blunted her indomitable spirit or bright smile, or her loving dedication to her family regardless of her disability. Perhaps only Jim was aware of how much pain she went through day in and day out. Nevertheless, she was proud, stubborn, and independent enough to always take life on her own terms, refusing to settle for anything less than a normal life. And she always maintained an optimistic outlook and a sincere interest in other people and their stories.

Marijane worked as a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor for the NYS Department of Education from the early '80s to the mid '90s. She, Jim, and family traveled around the country (including Hawaii several years ago), and to London and the Mediterranean for a special family vacation in 2006. They befriended neighbors and often said yes to many opportunities that came their way. In 1997, they moved to Ellicott City, Maryland, as a result of a promotion for Jim at Northrop Grumman. They subsequently moved to Millersville, and in 2015 to a welcoming 55+ community in Annapolis. Among her many other talents, Marijane was an excellent cook, an avid game player (especially playing cards), a consistent (and persistent!) and talented photographer—especially of her children—a dog lover (Cooper will miss her dearly), and resolute socializer who often assumed lead roles in the organizations she joined. But more than any other single quality, she was a tireless and devoted mother to her three children in every possible way. Disability be damned, nothing ever limited her advocacy and steadfast support of her sons and daughter, whatever they needed in any particular situation. And maybe as a result of her own experience as well as her children's, she was an inquisitive consumer of medical knowledge and could intelligently and often convincingly stand toe to toe with most doctors and medical personnel.

Marijane's mom Elayne passed away in 1993, and her dad followed seven years later. Each one fought the good fight against cancer, and it was Marijane who stood with them and for them every step of the way, to advocate, support, and care for them. She is survived by Jim, her husband of 43 years, her son Christopher and his wife Joy, her daughter Larisa and her son Rory,



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her son Justin, and her brother Bob. Her irrepressible spirit, lively wit, and love of others will be sorely missed by all who knew her. But she will live on in our hearts and minds, and our memories and actions. May she rest in the eternal peace of the Lord.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Seton Shrine (<https://setonshrine.org>) in Marijane's memory. A Funeral Mass will be held on March 3 at 11 AM at St. Andrew by the Bay in Annapolis. A Celebration of Life will be held at Lasting Tributes in Annapolis on March 4 from 2 - 4 PM and 6 - 8 PM.

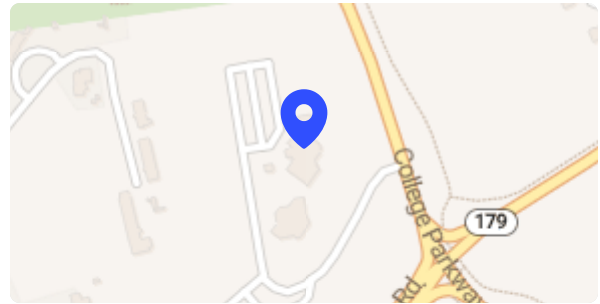


# Events

**Marijane V. Diffley**  
JUL 12, 1954 - FEB 21, 2025

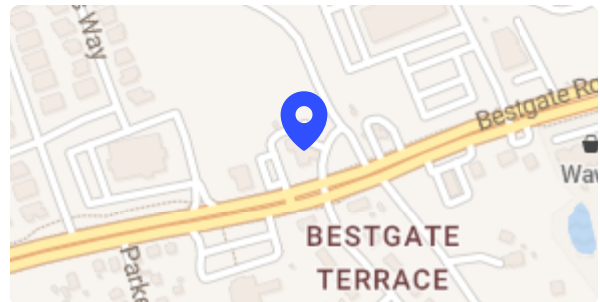
## Funeral Mass

- Monday**, March 3, 2025
- 11:00 AM ET
- St. Andrew by the Bay ????**  
701 College Pkwy, Annapolis MD 21409-5231



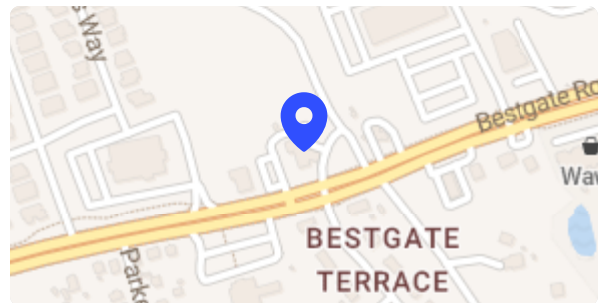
## Visitation

- Tuesday**, March 4, 2025
- 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM ET
- Lasting Tributes Cremation & Funeral Care**  
814 Bestgate Rd, Annapolis MD 21401



## Visitation

- Tuesday**, March 4, 2025
- 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM ET
- Lasting Tributes Cremation & Funeral Care**  
814 Bestgate Rd, Annapolis MD 21401





## Tribute Wall

**Marijane V. Diffley**  
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**Anonymous** planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Marijane.



March 5 at 5:36 AM



**Anonymous** sent a Decadent Delights Chocolate Gift Basket to the Diffley family.



March 5 at 5:36 AM



**Maryanne** posted:

I befriended Marijane through the prayers we shared for each other and our families. MJ was a gentle and kind spirit who was quick with a story and we shared laughter. I will miss her but I feel I have another angel 🙏 to help me here on earth. God bless her family and thank you for giving me such a sweet friend.

March 3 at 8:11 AM



**Anonymous** planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Marijane.



March 3 at 7:26 AM



**Anonymous** sent a Guiding Light Bouquet to the Diffley family.



March 3 at 7:26 AM



**Brandon Williamson** sent an Arrive in Style to the Diffley family.



March 2 at 4:21 PM



## Tribute Wall

**Marijane V. Diffley**

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**Chi-Chi Chen & I-Lang Wang** sent a Beautiful in Blue to the Diffley family.



February 27 at 4:54 PM



**Anonymous** planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Marijane.



February 26 at 6:18 PM



**Anonymous** sent an Emerald Garden Basket to the Diffley family.



February 26 at 6:18 PM



**Carol** posted:

Ohhh this news just saddens me so much. Marijane was one of those friends that even though we hadn't seen each other very much over the years when we did reconnect she always made me feel so loved and was so interested in what was going on in my life. We had some wonderful gatherings together with our Severna Park newcomers group. My thoughts are with all of you Carol Kin

February 26 at 6:00 PM



**Seth Schapiro** posted:

I was deeply saddened to learn of Marijane's passing, and I offer my sincere condolences to the entire Diffley family. The unconditional love, compassion, and support she showed for her family is both admirable and aspirational. I only have fond memories of her welcoming demeanor and genuine interest in the lives of those around her. She will be truly missed by those who were fortunate to have known her in life, and her legacy will live on in spirit.

February 26 at 2:12 PM



## Tribute Wall

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**Anonymous** planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Marijane.

February 26 at 9:14 AM



**Anonymous** sent a Fairest of All to the Diffley family.

February 26 at 9:14 AM



**The Taskey'S** sent an Arrive in Style to the Diffley family.

February 26 at 5:24 AM



**Kathleen Geary** posted:

Jim, I was so sorry to hear of your loss. Although Marijane and I have not been in touch recently, we were good friends through the Greater Severna Park Women's Club. We also shared a love of dogs and enjoyed hearing stories about our furry kids. Her vivacious spirit and lovely smile always lit up the room, and we will miss her. Kathy Geary

February 25 at 12:00 PM



**Marilyn Flanagan** posted:

I was so sorry and shocked to hear of Marijane's passing. My prayers go to her and the family who will miss her greatly. Marilyn Flanagan

February 25 at 4:55 AM



**Anonymous** planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Marijane.

February 24 at 11:37 AM





## Tribute Wall

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**Anonymous** sent a Sentiments of Serenity Spray to the Diffley family.



February 24 at 11:37 AM



# Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Marijane by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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