



## Mary Boehmer Allen

May 7, 1930 - November 10, 2021

Mary Boehmer Allen, 91, of Estero, FL, passed away on Wednesday, November 10, at North Naples Hospital. Formerly of Chicago, IL, and Milwaukee, WI, she relocated to American House-Coconut Point, Estero, FL, in 2019.

Mary was born May 7, 1930, in Chicago, IL, the daughter of the late Henry and Ramona Boehmer. As an elementary schooler, she developed a lifelong interest in gardening, growing radishes in small planters attached to the balcony of the family's third-floor apartment in Rogers Park, a neighborhood on the city's north side.

Mary's spirit of adventure and determination to enjoy life became apparent at an early age. When an uncle in the Navy sent her mother a large stuffed alligator in a wooden crate as a joke, Mary and her beloved sister Ramona fastened roller skates to the reptile's feet, tied a rope around its neck, and paraded around the block with the reptile in tow. As a teenager she became an expert horsewoman, learning to ride in parks on the outskirts of Chicago.

During World War II, she wrote letters to servicemen stationed overseas and joined the Civil Air Patrol cadet program.

She graduated from Maine East High School in Park Ridge, IL, and attended the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where she met the love of her life, John Allen, a U.S. Army infantry veteran. On their first date, a picnic, she made fried chicken, and unbeknownst to Mary, one of the rare foods John detested. He ate the chicken ... and praised it. They were married on February 3, 1951.

The marriage of John and Mary produced three sons and two daughters. After spending the kids' formative years as a stay-at-home mom, Mary returned to college to finish her bachelor's degree in sociology and earn a master's in social work at the University of Illinois at Chicago. She subsequently worked many years as a social worker in Chicago for the State of Illinois and Catholic Charities. Meanwhile, she was known to drop

anything, day or night, to rush to the aid of any of her children or their spouses when needed for emotional support, mentoring, or help with a grandchild.

Thanks to her parents and teachers, Mary developed a lifelong love of reading, switching to audiobooks in her later years when she lost her sight. Her kind heart and home always had room for animals, especially abandoned dogs and cats. Her strong ethic of public service, social justice, and hope for peacefully building a better United States through education and civil discourse set an example followed by her devoted children.

Mary was preceded in death by her husband, John, on January 17, 2005, after nearly 54 years of marriage.

Mary is survived by her loving children, William Allen (Debbie) of Columbia, MO; J.T. Allen (Laura Berry) of Los Angeles, CA; Mary Creswell (William) of Plymouth, MN; Mona Kurek (Ken) of Bonita Springs, FL; and Charles Allen (Cary) of Crystal Lake, IL; as well as 11 cherished grandchildren, Katie, John, Robyn, Lily, Cora, Kai, Alex, Rory, Jerry, Conner, and Cade, and three cherished great-grandchildren, Lucy, Evelyn, and Wiley. Mary was preceded in death by her beloved sister, Ramona Sutcliffe of Pittsburgh, PA.

A private memorial service will be held at Shikany's Bonita Funeral Home in Bonita Springs, FL. Mary's ashes will be laid to rest beside her beloved husband's at Mount Hope Cemetery, Champaign, IL, during a life celebration on Memorial Day weekend.

To honor Mary's wishes, in lieu of flowers the family suggests memorial contributions in her memory to the Humane Society of the United States or to JDRF, which supports type 1 diabetes research.

To sign Mary's guest register or to leave online condolences, please visit <http://www.ShikanyFuneralHome.com>.

Arrangements are being handled by Shikany's Bonita Funeral Home, Family Owned and Operated since 1978.

# Cemetery

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## **Mount Hope Cemetery**

611 E Pennsylvania Avenue

Champaign, IL, 61820

# Comments

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“ CJ & Family purchased the Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet for the family of Mary Boehmer Allen.



**CJ & Family** - November 15, 2021 at 11:21 PM

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“ What an absolutely wonderful story of her life and loves. She would be so pleased.

**Gaye** - November 15, 2021 at 07:44 PM