



## Joan M. Gibson-Alt

September 4, 1926 - June 5, 2022

Joan (Jo-An) Mariah Gibson was born September 4, 1926, to Jasper Gibson and Mary Blanche Moss in Cresson, Pennsylvania. Joan, the youngest of six children, spent her formative years in the community where she was born. After graduating from the only high school in the town, Joan enrolled in what was known at the time as Beauty School where she became a licensed beautician. While working in her chosen trade, Joan's aunt, Floretta introduced her to a dashing young man by the name of Paul Edward Alt who was working as a delivery man for Kaufmann's department store in Pittsburg. The two fell madly in love and married on March 29, 1946, in Savannah, Georgia. Shortly thereafter, the two lovebirds moved to St. Petersburg, Florida and then to Miami, Florida where Paul enlisted in the United States Coast Guard. After Paul completed his basic training, the couple moved to Traver City, Michigan, where Paul was trained in air-sea rescue and they had their first child, Alta in 1953. After his training, Paul and Joan moved to Ketchikan, Alaska where they spent six years weathering the cold and drinking in the beautiful scenery. After his tour of duty, the couple moved to North Miami, Florida where Paul enrolled in Emory Riddle on the GI Bill to become an aircraft mechanic. After receiving his license, Paul began working for Eastern Airlines where he worked until his retirement in 1990. While her husband was working, Joan began working part-time at a local department store until their second child, Charlene arrived in 1956. Joan was a fulltime mom for their girls and then in 1960 they welcomed their third child, Paul Jr. In 1965, Joan began working as a part-time cafeteria worker in Miami-Dade County Public Schools and over the next 30 years, she steadily moved from working as a part-time cafeteria worker to cafeteria manager at Highland Oaks Middle School. While working as a school district employee, she earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Miami Dade College and had their fourth child, Samuel in 1971. Paul retired from Eastern Airlines in 1990 a year before the company closed operations. Joan continued to work until 1995. After retiring, the couple moved to Stewart, Florida where they spent the next 15 years enjoying friends, playing cards, attending church, and boating. Their idyllic life ended when Paul was diagnosed with cancer a second time in his life and after a valiant attempt to defeat the disease, Paul succumbed in 2004. Paul and Joan enjoyed 53 years of marriage before his death at age 77. Joan continued to live in Stewart until 2012. As a strong, independent woman, Joan

carried on in the absence of her husband by immersing herself in her children, grandchildren, and a nearby Lutheran church where she volunteered as a cook and usher on many occasions. Joan remained steadfast in her desire to remain independent until failing health brought her to Aventura, Florida where her daughter Charlene and son-in-law, Matthew arranged for her to live in a condominium apartment facing the ocean and Biscayne Bay. Unfettered by the responsibilities of owning a house, Joan quickly adapted to condo-life. Joan formed friendships easily and very shortly was recognized and appreciated by many of the residents in the building. It was not uncommon to see Joan walking around the island community with friends or hanging out in the lobby to greet fellow residents or guests as they entered the building. Overtime, Joan's health deteriorated, and she lost the ability to interact with others and enjoy the activities she loved. The final few years of her life were spent in a wheelchair or in bed looking at the bay for extended periods of time. Joan Alt died at the age of 95 on June 5, 2022, in the company of family and friends. She is survived by her four children: Alta, Charlene, Paul, Samuel, and her grandchildren: Erika, Joseph, Jessica, Chelsea, Kevin, Samantha, and Sadee. Joan Alt was an exceptional human being. She was a loving wife, a committed mother, and a conscientious employee. She was a person of faith, not only in her belief of a higher power, but in her belief that families can withstand anything. She certainly demonstrated both as she navigated through life's journey during good and bad times. Her commitment to her husband and family was unwavering and it formed the basis of a life well-spent. Joan garnered love and respect from all who knew her. Joan Alt will be sorely missed.

Arrangements by Levitt-Weinstein Blasberg-Rubin-Zilbert Memorial Chapel (305) 932-2700

# Tribute Wall



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**Levitt-Weinstein Blasberg-Rubin-Zilbert Memorial Chapel** - June 13 at 11:42 AM