



## Josephine Bronder Keith

March 1, 1930 - October 20, 2020

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Josephine Bronder Keith was welcomed into the arms of her Lord and Savior on October 20, 2020 in San Antonio, Texas after 90 years of living with the world's most golden heart.

She was born in Verdi, Texas on March 1, 1930 to John and Mary (Korus) Bronder and was the youngest of 11 children. Josephine attended Verdi School and graduated from Pleasanton High School. Raised on nearby farms, her eventual husband's aunt was the midwife who delivered her into this world. Arthur King Keith, Sr. was the love of her life. They married shortly after he returned from combat in World War II, and for almost 74 years, they shared a life of joy, service, love, faith, and adventure with their three children, five grandchildren, and 11 great-grandchildren.

Josephine loved to travel and experience life. With only an atlas and a dream, she and her husband (and often her mother) packed their children into the family car to explore the country. Big Bend, Disneyland, The Grand Canyon, Connecticut, Colorado, Mexico...she wanted doors open for her kids! The stories from all of their travels were some of her favorites to share.

In the 1950s, Josephine worked as the chief switchboard operator and was known as “the voice of USAA” insurance company. Led by her servant’s heart, she volunteered at her children’s schools, helped as Den Mother for Cub Scouts, and spent a decade volunteering at St. Anthony’s Thrift Shop to help support women through crisis pregnancies. The Keith home was always a refuge for anyone who needed time and love to get back on their feet.

Josephine was a fierce advocate for abused women and children; she prayed fervently, donated generously, and counseled compassionately. She also spent many years, alongside her husband, caring for her mother and her sister, Lillie. Her passion for sharing her faith in Jesus Christ led her to teach Sunday School to children at numerous San Antonio churches, including her long-time church home, Oak Ridge Baptist. These precious students honored her with the life-long nickname that she embraced and loved greatly-- “Granny Jo.”

In the early 1970s, Granny Jo and her husband founded The Western Stars, a classic country gospel band that brought cheer and “old-time fun” to nursing homes and seniors in and around San Antonio. Every Friday night, she was on the front row clapping and smiling, dancing with residents, or serving meals to the band. The Western Stars are still going strong--with her husband at the helm on the steel guitar.

Granny Jo was a talented artist, crafter, seamstress, and writer. Her home was always joyfully decorated for every season and holiday. She never missed the opportunity to send a card--usually the envelope adorned with scripture and stickers and packed full of words of encouragement and love. If you were lucky enough to be on her Christmas card list, you would receive a handmade “Jo Flake,” a white delicately-crocheted snowflake ornament. Every year, she thoughtfully considered a unique design as she started making a new batch in January to ensure that she had plenty to share.

She will be remembered for her devout faith, her encouraging words, her keen joke-telling, her robust laughter, her enveloping hugs, but mostly for the way she truly loved and supported others without judgment and without hesitation. Her notes were so often signed, "You are so dearly loved!" So was she.

Josephine is preceded in death by her son, Arthur King Keith, Jr.; her former son-in-law Mark Jehl; her parents; all of her siblings--brothers (who all served in World War II at the same time), Henry, Edward, William, Anthony, Fred, Adolf, Ben, and Dave Bronder and sisters, Lillie Bronder and Rose Kinzie.

She is survived by her husband Arthur King Keith, Sr. of San Antonio; son Rodney and wife Brenda Keith of Bryan; daughter Jill Keith of Helotes; daughter-in-law Phyllis Keith of La Vernia; grandchildren Jason Keith Jehl (Ashley Moreno) of Helotes, Ashley Moncus (Shane) of Pflugerville, Jenna Allen (Jeremy) of Helotes, Michelle Ondeckek (Ron) of La Vernia, Lauren Harvey (Patrick) of La Vernia; great-grandchildren Noah Moreno, Corbin Keith Jehl, Trevor Keith Jehl, Eve Moncus, Finley Allen, Atticus Allen, Oliver Allen, Bryce Harvey, Andrew Harvey, Ronnie Ondeckek, Jackson Ondeckek, and countless other family members and friends who became family.

Visitation will be held at Mission Park Funeral Home at 3401 Cherry Ridge Drive in San Antonio on Thursday, October 29 at 11 a.m and the funeral service will begin at noon. Interment will be at Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery at 1:30 p.m.

Granny Jo's life celebration will be officiated by Reverend Bill Shockley. Mike Edwards will sing "Silver Wings" and "I'll Fly Away," Megan Lesczynski, accompanied by Charlie Pedrotti, will sing "Take My Hand, Precious Lord," and Finley Allen will read 1 Corinthians 13. Pallbearers who will carry her to her final resting place are Jeremy Allen, Patrick Harvey, Jason Keith Jehl,

Shane Moncus, Ron Ondeckek, and Harold Ritchie. Honorary Pallbearers are the members of The Western Stars past and present.

We would be honored by memorial donations to Camp Van Dorn WWII Museum at P.O. Box 1113 in Centreville, Mississippi 39631 in honor of Granny Jo's life.

# Cemetery Details

## Ft. Sam Houston National Cemetery

1520 Harry Wurzbach  
San Antonio, TX 78209

# Previous Events

## Visitation

OCT **29**. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

Mission Park Funeral Chapels Cherry Ridge  
3401 Cherry Ridge Dr  
San Antonio, TX 78230  
(210) 349-1414  
<https://www.missionparks.com/>

## Funeral Service

OCT **29**. 12:00 PM (CT)

Mission Park Funeral Chapels Cherry Ridge  
3401 Cherry Ridge Dr  
San Antonio, TX 78230  
(210) 349-1414  
<https://www.missionparks.com/>

# Tribute Wall

CK

“ *Mr. Keith and Family--*

*Please know that you are in our thoughts and prayers. Michael and I feel very fortunate that we had Mrs. Keith, "Granny Jo," in our lives.*

*She was a dear friend and a wonderful neighbor. She made us feel like family. We will always treasure those wonderful memories. May God bless you.*



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**Carol and Michael Kosarek** - October 30, 2020 at 12:38 AM



“ *Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet was purchased for the family of Josephine Bronder Keith.*



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October 26, 2020 at 05:37 PM

BB

“ I only just met Jo about a year ago, although I am sure I met her when I was a little girl growing up in Verdi. Her brothers & my Dad were *BIG BUDS*, as told by my Dad & by Jo! Growing up in the country back then was such a special thing that our kids today will not have the experience of doing. Things today are so different. Back then, after the chores were done then ya got to swing from grapevines or go swimmin' down at the pond. Fishing was a fun experience as well.

*I am thankful for getting to know Jo and King previous to our Leming reunion in 2019. My son lives on the property where Jo was raised and her memories of the place were spot on!*

*God's peace be with the family during this sad time.*

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**Bonny Badour** - October 26, 2020 at 03:49 PM



“ *Beautiful Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of Josephine Bronder Keith.*



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October 26, 2020 at 03:12 PM