



Janell McPherson

January 13, 1946 - March 24, 2026

Janell Claire McPherson of Topeka, Kansas, beloved mother to Chad and Lee Benaka and favorite sister of Deanna Brooks, passed away on March 24, 2026.

Janell was born in Lawrence, Kansas, on January 13, 1946, to Bessie and Irwin Greer. She spent her early years in Baldwin, Kansas, before moving to Topeka.

In addition to her love for Chad and Lee, Janell also loved and took great pride in her grandchildren Elias Benaka, Dinah Benaka, and Isaac Benaka. Janell was thrilled that her boys found amazing partners in Margaret Benaka and Danielle Feuillan.

Janell worked a variety of jobs during her life, but her proudest accomplishment was co-founding Positive Solutions, an estate sale business that also provided services for seniors transitioning to smaller homes. Janell's family and friends will miss her irreverent sense of humor and her cooking, including her salmon croquettes, 7-Up salad, and pies. Janell's grandchildren will especially miss her thoughtful and fun Christmas presents, a highlight of the holiday each year.

Janell was preceded in death by her second husband, Ralph Campbell, who

co-founded Positive Solutions with her and traveled with her to various parts of the United States, from Washington to Florida. Janell was also preceded in death by her third husband, Larry McPherson, who was devoted to her and took great care of her.

In addition to her sons and sister, Janell is survived by her first husband, Robert Benaka; grandchildren, Elias, Dinah, and Isaac Benaka; stepchildren, Rebecca Johnson, Cris Salisbury, and Bob McPherson; and step-grandchildren, Meghan Lewis, Adam Salisbury, and Emily and Ethan McPherson.

A celebration of life, where Janell's family will greet friends from 3 to 5 p.m. Friday, March 27, 2026, at Kevin Brennan Family Funeral Home at 2801 SW Urish Road, Topeka KS 66614.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Helping Hands Humane Society (<https://www.hhhstopeka.org/donate-online/>) or ACLU Kansas (<https://action.aclu.org/give/support-aclu-kansas>) and sent in care of the funeral home.

Condolences may be sent online to www.kevinbrennanfamily.com.

Previous Events

Visitation

MAR 27. 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM (CT)

Kevin Brennan Family Funeral Home
2801 SW Urish Road
Topeka, KS 66614
(785) 272-7888
info@kevinbrennanfamily.com

Tribute Wall



“ Kevin Brennan Family Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Janell McPherson



Kevin Brennan Family Funeral Home - March 27 at 11:44 AM

SO

“ *Janell was a very special person, full of life, joy, and love for everyone, especially Chad and Lee and their families and her sister Deanna.*

I have known Janell ever since grade school. We were in scouts together too and her witty sense of humor is what I remember most. Janell was always smiling.

When my sister Karen and I moved away, Janell made it a point to keep a strong connection with our mom. I hope Janell knew how much those conversations meant to her.

I will also remember Janell's kindness and and caring ways! That in essence is who she was!

My deepest sympathies to her sister Deanna, her sons Chad and Lee and their families! I will miss all your joyful posts!

(I have attached a picture that I knew I had and finally found...Janell and her dear friend Marci Fuller in 1959 at a scout slumber party! The two of them feeling joy and happiness and bringing it to others!)
Sharen (Stallard) Overand



Sharen Overand - March 31 at 07:24 PM

KW

“ I was also a classmate of Janell. I knew her from grade school on and she was always a cutie, funny, caring, etc. Even though I have lived in Colorado all of these years after graduation from college my connection with her was through Facebook. You could see the love she had for her boys and their families. Her love for her sister. Janell always made you feel special! In the summers growing up my sister and I would go with our mom to Janell's house as our mom sold AVON to Janell's mom. We all loved Bessie too! I read Marci's comments and oh my I do remember Marci and Janell doing the Donald and Daisy Duck voices! Those two were hilarious!! What a bright shining star she was inside and out!! My deepest sympathies to Chad and Lee and their families, to her sister, and all of those so very close to Janell!! I will miss seeing pictures of her cat on FB, pictures of her holiday decorating, pictures of Chad and Lee and their families when they visited and so much more!! She always felt very blessed!! She took so much pride in her family, her home, and her connections with friends. I am so very sorry for your loss. Keeping you in my thoughts and prayers. Janell was very special!
Karen Woods

Karen Woods - March 29 at 01:09 PM

CA

“ janell I will miss you everyday my friend. Rip. carol ashwill

carol - March 27 at 05:07 AM

DM

“ We always enjoyed getting together with Larry & Janell. We were grateful for the friendship we shared with this wonderful couple.
Doug & Karlita Miller

Doug & Karlita Miller - March 26 at 09:04 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Janell McPherson.

March 26 at 05:58 PM



“ Your Cape Cod family (the Smiths) purchased the Enchanted Cottage for the family of Janell McPherson.



Your Cape Cod family (the Smiths) - March 26 at 04:48 PM

MH

“ I met Janell in the third grade. We liked each other immediately. Before long we were spending lots of time together. Her mother was a 4th grade teacher and her sister was in my brother's class. We both loved comedy and music, and we spent hours making up skits to perform for our classmates at school or at church. My brother could speak like Donald Duck, so Janell and I spent hours learning to speak Donald Duck. Janell's "duck" voice was higher than mine so she became a Daisy Duck to my Donald voice. We had a wonderful time entertaining classmates and our parents with our Daisy and Donald routines. Janell could improvise and I learned how to go along with it. Such great memories!

We spent several walks to and from school trying to do a "wolf whistle" and nearly collapsed from dizziness. But, we both could break the eardrums with our wolf whistles.

So many wonderful memories! Janell had such a great way with words. She had a fondness for elderly people and loved having conversations with them, making them laugh.

It would take many volumes to tell about the life of this wonderful, funny, positive, loving, and unforgettable, dear friend.

She lived her life well always and her love for her family is evident in their caring love for her. I am blessed to have known her.

Well done, Janell. I love you. I miss you!

Marci Fuller Huffman - March 25 at 07:40 PM

TM

I met Janelle through her sister Deanna. Our HPHS group certainly enjoyed having her with us at our monthly meetings. She was such a delight with her wonderful smile and positive attitude. She will be greatly missed. Tondra Ann Miller 🦋

Tondra Miller - March 26 at 10:20 PM

JR

“ I got to know Janell a few years back through a mutual friend. I really enjoyed her friendship so much. we laughed and visited like we had known each other for a long time. I will really miss her. I pray for the family as you remember all the wonderful memories you have of her.

Jane Robertson - March 25 at 04:44 PM

KL

“ Janell will be dearly missed. I had the privilege of getting to see Janell & Larry often at the Antique Mall Washburn View & then after Larry passed I got to continue to visit with Janell and help her with a neighbor she was helping. I will miss her and our visits. Rest in Peace and sending hugs & healing to the family. Karen Long

Karen Long - March 25 at 03:10 PM

JN

“ Janell and I were classmates in school. I always thought she was a beautiful, kind, caring, thoughtful person who had a wickedly funny sense of humor and a wonderful singing voice. I will keep her family in my prayers as they go through the hard process of saying good-bye.

Joyce Rutledge Newman - March 25 at 03:09 PM

DB

“ I met Janell at Perkins and her son also she also knew my mom she will be missed RIP my friend i will have a slice of lemon pie in your memory .

Debra Bahret her best sever from Perkins

debra bahret - March 25 at 11:02 AM

JA

“ *Janelle has been my friend since grade school. Even when we hadn't seen each other for awhile we could always catch up like it hadn't been that long at all. When she owned Positive Solutions Estate sales I always looked forward to seeing her and all the treasures and antiques for sale. Her sales were the best. When she started having health issues a few years ago she always seemed to take it in stride. Never really complaining and just accepting whatever she needed to deal with. Lee, Chad, Deanna and all of her family I'm praying for peace and comfort as you navigate your life without this kind, caring, fun lady. I will certainly miss her too. So happy I made her those chocolate chip cookies she asked for and was able to visit with her one last time a couple of weeks ago.*

Janice Kietzman Arnold

Janice Kietzman Arnold - March 24 at 10:18 PM