



Julie Ann Plassey

September 10, 1950 - February 18, 2026

Julie Ann Plassey, a one-of-a-kind spirit whose laughter, convictions, and fierce love for both people and nature left an indelible mark on all who knew her, passed away on February 18, 2026, in Fayetteville, Arkansas. She was 75.

Born on September 10, 1950, in Pontiac, Michigan, Julie was raised in Rochester, Michigan, where she graduated from Rochester High School before attending Central Michigan University and Eastern Michigan University. She grew up surrounded by a close-knit extended family—grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins who shaped her early years. She loved playing with her dad and testing her mom’s limited patience. Together, she, her siblings, and her parents worked tirelessly on their family’s Christmas tree farm.

In her early adulthood, she spent time living in Canada, adding to the independent and adventurous spirit that would come to define her life. She eventually settled in Northwest Arkansas, where she lived for nearly 50 years, most recently in Bentonville, embracing the serenity of country life she so deeply loved.

Julie was an antiques dealer by trade—a vocation that suited her perfectly—and a storyteller at heart. To Julie, antiques were not simply things; they were

vessels of memory. Whether running her own shop, working antique shows and markets, or conducting business independently, she was fascinated not just by the objects themselves, but by their histories—their context, their origin stories, and the lives they had touched before. Julie had a gift for seeing the world in its details, and antiques gave her an endless supply of them. She also loved family heirlooms, not just as objects but as connective tissue—tangible links to the people who came before.

To know Julie was to know a character. She was funny—capable of deep, contagious belly laughs that filled a room and lingered long after the moment had passed—and possessed a wit that was both sharp and playful. She had a particular fondness for inside jokes—they were her love language. A loyal and generous friend, she was also fiercely determined and, at times, happily stubborn. She could be a maverick, but always with thought and conviction behind her perspective. Julie did not merely hold opinions; she championed them. Those who loved her knew that her strength of will was matched by her kindness, thoughtfulness, and generosity.

Julie felt most at peace outdoors. She was a dedicated environmentalist who believed, with genuine passion, that Mother Nature deserved reverence and protection. She found meaning in the particular silence of a country morning, in the sounds of birds, in the emergence of new life, and in the serenity that comes from living close to the land. She loved her gardens and tended them with care. She loved a brilliant sunset—the kind that seems to set the whole sky on fire. She loved a good lightning storm: the drama of it, the electricity in the air, the way nature announces itself without apology. She loved sitting by a fire, fresh berries in season, and the Northern Lights with a wonder that never dimmed.

She was a traveler drawn to wide open spaces and grand landscapes. Yellowstone National Park held a special place in her heart, as did Glacier

National Park—places where the earth itself seems to exhale, where the scale of things puts human concerns in their proper proportion. She returned from those places with stories, memories, and a refreshed sense of how extraordinary the world is if you're paying attention. Julie was always paying attention.

She loved music, particularly the classic rock artists who formed the soundtrack of her life—artists like the Eagles, Seger, Janis, Queen, and Elton John, among many others. She also delighted in simple pleasures: Jeopardy!, a witty joke, discovering a good deal, a good bagel, and something sweet at the end of the day. She loved her dogs dearly and took great pride in caring for her friends, family, and property.

She was married to Ernest Shrader, a Master Sergeant in the United States Army, whose military service was a source of great pride for Julie. Ernie preceded her in death, and with him went a partnership that shaped much of her adult life. She honored his memory and his service until the very end.

Julie was also preceded in death by her parents, Bill and Helen Plassey, and her brother, Brian Plassey. She is survived by her daughter, Leila Plassey-Harrington and her family; her sister, Marsha Burley; her nephew, Matt McKillop and his family; Jacob Shrader and his family, who came into her life through her husband, Ernie, and remained part of her extended family; and dear friends.

Julie will be cremated. A formal service has not yet been scheduled, though her family hopes to hold a celebration of her life—the kind of gathering she would have approved of, with good company, lots of food, plenty of laughter, and maybe a fire to sit around as the evening settles in.

Those wishing to honor Julie's memory are invited to make a donation in her name to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital or Arkansas PBS—two organizations that reflect her values: compassion for the vulnerable and a belief in the power of knowledge and culture to enrich our lives.

Julie was unforgettable—funny, thoughtful, stubborn, generous, and entirely her own. The birds, the sunsets, the crackle of a fire, and the sweep of the Northern Lights will forever carry her spirit.

Tribute Wall

NP

“ *If Julie was your friend, she was a really good friend. If she was your friend, she would always be there with whatever help you needed. She cared so much that sometimes I think it overwhelmed her. In our small close-knit group of women, she made the biggest difference. We were all closer because of her. She was very intelligent and really funny. We laughed a lot over the years. We could talk on the phone for an hour or two without a pause. I will miss Julie, having lunch, shopping at Fresh Market, buying purses on the Military website together, but I think I'll miss our phone calls in my life, most of all. Till we meet again, my friend. Love you, Nancy*

Nancy Perry - February 26 at 09:43 AM

HM

Julie was a great friend - always ready to listen and help a friend in need. Great fun to travel with - Vegas baby! And my go to for aches and pains - her bag was full of essential oils for any ailment. Julie was such a large part of our lives and will be so missed ❤️

Hope Matthews - February 26 at 09:51 AM

LO

Losing Julie has been very hard on all of us that loved her. She was the friend that kept up on what was going on in all of our lives. If there was something she could do for you she was on it without hesitation. Julie could give you wise words when needed and cheered for you all the way.

We had lots of laughs at many dinners and lunches. When we met up she always had a smile and you knew she enjoyed our group friend time.

Julie will be deeply missed ❤️

linda oletti - February 26 at 10:17 AM

VI

I only knew Julie through her pets at the vet clinic. I really loved her. She really loved her babies. After reading all of this I wish I had known her more. I guess that is the lesson she has taught me through this.

Vicky - March 11 at 03:20 PM