

Freedom Spirit of Florida Women's Softball Team is continuing the legacy of our recently deceased coach Janet Lee Ellis by making a memorial cash donation to the young girls softball team, the Clearwater Lady Bombers. This presentation will be done on Monday May 2nd at the Eddie C. Moore softball complex on Drew rd. Jan's granddaughter, Alyson, will present the check.

Jan Ellis was born in Dover, Delaware March 1, 1940 and died in Clearwater of complications from Covid January 19,2022
She was married to Harry Ellis, who currently lives in Clearwater. They had three daughters, Judy, Tracy and Gayle.

Throughout Jan's life softball was a common thread: from playing with the boys at recess in elementary and junior high school to playing in high school, college, adult summer leagues, and then into her early 60's, even one year playing with all three of her daughters.

Jan was always an integral part of her community, by always supporting summer softball programs for the youth. At age15 she was asked to gather some friends to build a team. That team eventually morphed into the summer softball league which is still thriving to this day.

Later, after becoming a high school teacher, she was fundamental in starting a girl's Little League program in Milford, Delaware where she taught.

Jan's extensive knowledge of the games but, more importantly, her ability to identify a player's strengths led to many successful outcomes on the field. Her coaching style was inspirational not only to her students but to her teammates as well. So much so that many of them also made softball a lifelong sport. She mentored a multitude of students over the years, even literally taking students into her home.

In a bio for Freedom Spirit she wrote, "I consider myself so lucky that sports could be a part of my life. The most gratifying part of playing has not been the numerous wins, trophies, even championships for they all come and go. The best part has been the camaraderie and life-long friendships that developed from being part of a team."

Jan was diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis in her mid-30's but she fought against it slowing her down, though she was often in pain. Sometime after

turning 60 she suffered a horrendous medical accident after being operated on for a hip replacement which resulted in the amputation of her left leg above the knee. She struggled from that time on finding prosthetics that would give her good mobility but she never complained and she never stopped. She went on to coach Freedom Spirit to many wins in local games and medals in every National Senior Games beginning with a gold in Pittsburgh in 2005. Another gold, 2 silvers and 3 bronze up to 2019.

Jan was a remarkable, dearly loved coach and friend who is sorely missed. It is Freedom Spirit Softball Team's fervent wish that by assisting the young Lady Bombers we have made Jan proud.