

Anita Jo Coon, long time art instructor, artist and musician, of Storm Lake, Iowa passed away on November 8, 2011, at BVRMC Hospice in Storm Lake after a 4 year illness with Pancreatic Cancer. Anita was born March 21, 1952, in Storm Lake. She was the daughter of Donald and Vivian (Gregersen) Toomer, of Nemaha, IA. She graduated from Crestland High School in 1970 and attended Drake University and then graduated from Buena Vista University in 1975, with a bachelor's degree in Art Education and Music Education. She married Jay Francis Coon of Early on March 3, 1973, at the United Methodist Church in Nemaha. She then attended Mankato State University where she received a Master's degree in Fine Arts.

During her college years she helped spearhead the Buena Vista Dozen and was active in musical theater and the visual arts. She taught high school art for 23 years at Crestland/Schaller schools and taught 9 years at Storm Lake High School. She also did adjunct work for Buena Vista University. She received the outstanding secondary art educator award from the state Art Educators of Iowa in 1993. She presented art workshops locally and nationally.

She loved art, music, dance and theater; Anita participated in local community theater and was a member of the Chautauqua Dancers, Currier Carolers, Siouxland Master Chorale and Touch of Broadway. Anita operated a working art studio, "Studio Upstairs," she was actively involved in solo and group exhibitions including A.R.T. She liked church music ministry where she served as choir director and cantor in the Catholic Church for many years.

Anita will forever be remembered by her devoted husband, Jay Coon of Storm Lake; son Joshua Coon, wife Christi, children Aubrey Grace and Ryan Evan of Mt. Juliet, TN; daughter Gabrielle Grooters, husband Scott, children Austin Jay and Maren Elizabeth of Spring Hill, TN; brother Greg Toomer of Early, IA, children Lisa, Mark, Erin, and John; sister Valerie Toomer and partner Nancy Manderfeld of Eden Prairie, MN, sister Jennifer Toomer Lasota, husband Randy and son Charles of Minnetonka, MN. Anita was preceded in death by her parents Donald and Vivian Toomer, along with her grandparents, Charles and Evelyn Toomer and Adolph and Marie Gregersen.

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