



Jana L. (Zapp) Packard

July 4, 1957 - April 15, 2026

Jana Lynne (Zapp) Packard passed away peacefully with her family surrounding her, at home in San Jacinto, Ca on April 15, 2026. This marked her 32 wedding anniversary.

Jana was born during a thunderstorm, in Great Barrington, Mass. on July 4, 1957 to Dorothy and Nicholas Zapp. She was the third of four children, and named by her father after a rodeo queen with a radiant smile. Raised on the family farm, she experienced a full country childhood, with pets, chores, 4-H and friends and family. She graduated from Hudson High School, Columbia Greene Comm. College and Columbia Memorial School of Nursing.

Jana chose Psychiatric Nursing as her path.

She married Alexander McKnight and embarked on her nursing journey. This led her to live and work outside London, UK for a time. Arriving back in NY, they welcomed son Alexander. Later, a daughter, Fiona, was born sleeping.

Jana and family moved to LA, Ca. Life changed and Jana met her second husband, Steven Packard. After marriage and while living in San Diego, they welcomed son, Seth. Work brought Jana to Temecula and then San Jacinto, where they bought their home. Jana's farm girl roots helped her create a lovely back yard haven, with trees and herbs and native plants. She treasured the utility wagon Steve custom painted for her use. The yard was a retreat where craft beers were shared after work, with Steve.

Her outreach to others was shown by her knitting scarves for homeless, caring for feral cats in the yard. She loved decorating the garage for Trick or

Treating and wearing a costume. Her talents included playing clarinet and cello, and singing. (She once wanted to be a rock cellist or backup singer. She was a '70's girl!) She loved Patsy Cline and old Sons of the Pioneers records. Jana also successfully beat breast cancer and medical issues that ensued. Shortly after retiring, she was diagnosed with dementia, which advanced brutally fast. Due to the devoted, precise care by Steve, Seth, Alex and skilled Hospice workers, Jana remained securely, comfortably in her home. Her spirit cat, Cinnamon was by her side until the end.

Jana is survived by her husband Steven, son Seth Packard, son Alexander (Alexandra) McKnight, and many Packard relatives who embraced her. She leaves cherished girlfriends to toast her memory. Here at home she is survived by her mother, Dorothy Zapp; by her sister Audrey (Peter) Meicht; brother Dean (Michele) Zapp, their children Louis (Meredith) Zapp, Ashley (William) Donley and Nicholas (Molly) Zapp; sister Jamie Libertelli and son Joseph Libertelli; with other beloved niece, nephews, cousins.

Interment will be at St. Davids Episcopal Church, 5050 Milton St., San Diego, CA 92110 in their Memory Garden at a future date.

Should anyone wish to donate in her memory, the church above or Haven Pet Center, 690 Humane Way, San Jacinto, CA 92582, havenpetcenter.org would honor her, or any other charity.

The evening of April 15, a massive thunder and lightening storm roared through Columbia Co., marking Jana's arrival in Heaven. She is at rest there.

Tribute Wall

LM

“ *Lola McKnight lit a candle in memory of Jana Packard*



Lola McKnight - May 10 at 03:45 PM

MM

“ *michael melnyk lit a candle in memory of Jana Packard*



michael melnyk - May 09 at 06:10 AM

DR

“ *Jana was a cherished cousin of mine in the Zapp clan. She always had a beautiful smile and could make you laugh. She fought a good fight and thanks to Steve and Seth she was able to leave us peacefully. She is with God now and smiling*

Dorothy Robinson - May 07 at 06:34 PM