

**Joan "Jo" McKinley**, "charming" daughter of Samuel Arthur (1884-1963)

Lansing State Journal, May 28, 1931



JOAN McKINLEY, charming daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Sam McKinley, 1001 W. Ottawa street, Lansing.

and Nona Ann (Rupe) (1894-1981) McKinley, was born 28 July 1928, Lansing, Ingham County, Michigan. Jo graduated from Okemos High School in 1945 and married one of her father's employees, Walter Samuel Hughes, 4 May 1946 in Indiana. Walter was a World War II US Coast Guard veteran.

Jo's father successfully established and ran a horse farm, Northwind Farms, in East Lansing, Ingham County, from which his wife, Nona, became extremely well known for breeding American Saddle Horses.

Mr. McKinley, originally a farrier for the Ringling Brothers, Barnum and Bailey Circus, was the International Trap Shooting Champion in 1926 at St. Thomas, Ontario, Canada and a professional shooter for an American ammunition company.

There were three children in the McKinley family, 2 girls and a boy. The son, George Patrick "Pat" McKinley, was a graduate of Culver Military and a sophomore at Michigan State College when he enlisted in the US Army 10 April 1942. Pat married Rosann Murner 27 August 1942, Lansing. He went on to achieve 2nd Lieutenant rank, be assigned to the 728th Bomb Squad 454 AAF Bomb Group and to pilot B-24 Liberator bombers. Pat was listed as MIA over Austria 11 December 1944. He and crew were believed to have been downed during a bombing raid to Frankfort, Germany. At the time of death, he was the father of a 13 month old son, George Patrick McKinley Jr.

Jo and husband ran Northwind Farms for many years, raising their three children, Tom, Sam and Jorja, there.

## **BREEDING FINE HORSES CALLS FOR SKILL AND HARD WORK**

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*LSJ, May 6, 1951*

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"We have a five-day work week for all the horses," Mr. Hughes explains. "On Monday we 'jog everything to harness' (meaning all the horses are driven on a cart), on Tuesday we ride everything under saddle, on Wednesday and Thursday we drive in harness again, and on Friday we ride again."

Same as for all good housekeepers, Saturday is cleaning day for Hughes. He and his four assistants scrupulously clean all tack and rig; the barns are all dusted down, and the horses themselves come in for a good polishing with currycomb, brush and clippers. The week-end finds everything in tip-top shape and in summer the show horses are ready for exhibition.

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Started at 15

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He hired out for \$30 a month plus board and room and found himself whitewashing what he calls "miles of and miles of white board fence."

*cont. LSJ, May 6, 1951*

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From these he went on to breaking young colts. That was where his unusual ability became apparent and he went right to showing their top horses for Holecamp Farms.

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"I only expected to stay that season," he said, "but we had such a successful one showing the horses that Sam McKinley said, "We'll build a big barn and go on with this showing and breeding."

And so they built the huge 150 foot barn and other glistening white buildings that make North Wind Farms one of the show places of Michigan.

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But the war didn't keep Walt from the horses. He found himself in a mounted coast guard patrol covering the Jersey coast line. Every foot of the shore had to be patrolled by men carrying walkie-talkies. A master chart showed headquarters exactly where each man was on every minute of his patrol. In the amusing way the armed forces have of mixing things up, Hughes tells that the sea-going coast guard boys took the army remount horses for their vigil while the cavalry was forced to cover their section of the coast on foot. When radar reached perfection both branches relinquished their job to the air corps.  
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*Lansing State Journal, November 23, 1947*

Others away this week-end are Mrs. Sam McKinley and Walter Hughes, her son-in-law. The two have three horses in the Royal Agriculture winter fair at Toronto. The show ends in time for them to be back at North Wind farm for Thanksgiving dinner with Mrs. Hughes and Walter III. Also with them for the holiday will be Mr. and Mrs. Carrol Hall of Plymouth, Wis.

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It hasn't been all smooth sailing though, Hughes will have you know. He bought "Spooks," a top four-year-old, to show point and had him sold for \$5,000. A few days before he was to be delivered, the colt cut his foot, developed tetanus, and was died within 10 days. Four years of hard work gone for naught.

A blow to all at the farm was the death last May of Oklahoma Peavine, sensational stallion, and one of the greatest sires in American saddlebred horse history. Hartford Insurance company had refused to insure him past the age of 18 but Lloyds of London held the insurance till his death at 26.

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*Lansing State Journal, November 10, 1999*

**HUGHES, JR., WALTER S.**

**Largo, FL  
Formerly of East Lansing**

Age 84, died on October 25, 1999 while on vacation in Virginia. Mr. Hughes was the manager of North Wind Farms in East Lansing. In later years, he had a successful career in steel sales. Mr. Hughes served in the Coast Guard during World War II. He was a life time member of the Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite and Elf Khurafeh Shrine Temple. He is survived by his loving wife of 53 years, Joan; 3 children, Sam (Ronnie) Hughes and son, Collin, Jorja (Robert) Feldman and son, Jay Howe, Tom and daughter, Meghan Hughes. A Memorial Service will take place on **November 20th at Sylvan Abbey Funeral Home in Clearwater, FL.** In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to: ADI, 13650 Stonybrook Drive, Clearwater, FL 33762.

Walter, born 25 March 1913 in Georgia, died while vacationing in Virginia 25 October 1999. Jo died 24 December 2019, Florida.



*Tampa Bay Times on Jan. 1, 2020 and in Lansing State Journal from Jan. 2 to Jan. 3, 2020*

**HUGHES**, Joan McKinley "Jo" was born in Lansing, Michigan July 28, 1928. When she was nine years old, her parents purchased land and founded a horse farm, Northwind Farms, in East Lansing, Michigan. Northwind Farms became a local landmark. She married the farm manager, Walter Hughes, in 1946. They continued to reside at Northwind Farms where they raised their three children. After raising their

family, Jo returned to school, obtaining a RN degree from Lansing Community College. She spent her working career as a nurse at Sparrow Hospital in Lansing until 1988 when she and Walter moved to Florida. The move to Florida prompted a career change. She joined her close friend, Diana Mason, as a travel agent in Diana's travel business. They worked and traveled side by side for 10 years. After losing her husband of fifty-three years, Jo returned to nursing. She volunteered as a nurse four days a week for the next fifteen years at the Clearwater Free Clinic. For her service she was awarded the Clinic's prestigious Nightingale Award marking only the second time the Award had been granted. In 2016 Jo returned to Michigan, residing at Brecon Village in Saline. The move to Michigan was prompted by a desire to be near family. Jo was able during her lifetime to experience not only the joy of children, but to know the delight of grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She is survived by a daughter and one of two sons. Her daughter Jorja Feldman, Jorja's husband Rob Feldman, Jorja's son Jay Howe, and Jay's children, Riley and Brody Howe, all reside in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Jo's son Tom Hughes, together with his husband, Kirk, reside in San Diego, California. Tom's daughter Meghan Hughes lives in Austin, Texas. Jo's son Sam Hughes predeceased her in 2013. His son Collin Hughes lives with his wife Shirley and their children, Ashleign and Connor, in Wellington, Florida. Jo was known for her friendly manner, ready smile and great sense of humor. She enjoyed company and was a good listener. Jo passed away Christmas Eve, December 24, 2019. Friends and family will miss her dearly.

*We were notified of Joan's death by Laurel Winkel '68 and Tom Hughes '68.*

*Sherrie Paty Barber '66*