

# Joan Winter

## Becomer's Mystery Person of the week - November 4, 2008

Joan was born in Normal, Illinois, where she and her older brother, Bob, grew up. From early childhood Joan dreamed of traveling and seeing the world, and her mother was a great encouragement. After completing her college education and a Masters Degree from Wesleyan University in Missouri, Joan taught school for two years. She saved her money, and in her early 20s, she set off on a trip around the world by herself.

Joan taught in the field of early childhood development. She opened and ran a nursery school soon after she completed her education; however, for much of her career life, she taught Early Childhood Development at Cal State, Fullerton.

Joan met Vic on a bus tour to Hungary, Romania and the Soviet Union. When the trip was over, Joan went on to Poland, and Vic was going home. Joan struck a deal with Vic that, if he would take some of her souvenirs home for her, she would pack his suitcase. So, Vic's cowboy boots were packed full of Russian eggs and dolls. Thus began a love story. They married about a year after the trip. Vic proposed by telling Joan that he would like to put his brand on her.

Vic and Joan decided to elope. They drove 100 miles from Vic's ranch to another county in Colorado so that their application for a marriage license would not appear in the local newspaper. They had a church wedding in Estes Park. A few days later they took a honeymoon cruise to Alaska, and they mailed out the announcements of their marriage on the ship.

Joan enjoyed life on the ranch immensely. She participated in caring for the animals and especially enjoyed her sheep. Vic and Joan spent many happy days together on the ranch.

All the continents have received a visit from Joan. Some of them she toured with her husband, Vic. In every place Joan has visited around the world, she has taken the time and interest to meet the local people. On many occasions she has been invited into homes or asked to participate in ceremonies or meetings. When Joan and Vic were in Borneo, they stopped by a religious building, and a man was giving a speech on cleansing from sin. Because of the interest Joan and Vic had taken in the people there, Joan was asked to hold a bird cage containing sparrows, which the town people had recently caught. The speaker was telling the people gathered that they needed to put their sins on the sparrows so that they could be free from sin. Joan became anxious that the birds were going to be killed and was much relieved when she was asked to open the cage and release the birds. The people explained to Joan that when the door is opened and the birds fly away, all of the bad thoughts and deeds of the people fly away with the birds.

Throughout her life Joan has been a dog lover and has adopted several dogs through the years. One of her dogs was Koala Bear, and Joan took him to obedience class. Koala Bear was not interested in the class or obeying any of the commands. As the final test approached, Koala Bear was at the bottom of the class. Just before the class began, Joan took Koala Bear aside and talked to him, telling him that she knew he was smart; that she (Joan) had done all she could, and now it was up to the dog. When the testing was through, Koala Bear took first place and won the Blue Ribbon.

Joan has a favorite plaque in her home which reads: The reason a dog has so many friends is that he wags his tail instead of his tongue.