

# *Sandra Jean Tapia*

Sandra Jean Tapia, known by everyone as Sam, 64, passed away peacefully on September 30, 2021 surrounded by her family after a long illness. She was born to Joe and Cheney Leal on September 2, 1957 in Casa Grande. She graduated from Casa Grande Union High School in 1975. She worked for the Pinal County Recorder's Office in the Voter Registration Office for 18 plus years. She was an amazingly strong and courageous woman who scheduled her chemo and radiation treatments around her work schedule for the first nine months of her original diagnosis of lung cancer in September of 2019 until progression of the disease forced her retirement in 2020 and still managed to exceed the life expectancy some of her doctors felt she had at the time.



Sam was very organized and very meticulous in her home and work. Some of her favorite sayings were, "don't overthink it, just get it done" and "it is what it is". She was reserved but could be very outspoken when she thought it necessary. She had a great sense of humor which she maintained until her last day on earth. She loved cooking programs, the AZ Diamondbacks, and you didn't dare go over or call when she was watching the AZ Cardinals.

Sam doted on her babies (as she called her grandchildren). They were her pride and joy, always rejoicing in their accomplishments. Another great love in her life was her dog, Gizmo, who was also by her side when she passed.

Sam is survived by her husband of 44 years, Eugene (Tootsie) Tapia; daughter, Kristie Marie; stepdaughter, Melissa Apodoca; grandchildren, Bear, Rhealyn, Jhosyah, Renee, Ricky and Rachel; mother, Cheney Leal; sisters, Cynthia (Michael) Keck and Teri (Garye) Vasquez of Casa Grande; brothers, Joseph and Jesse (Perla) Leal of Casa Grande, Jeff (Jennifer) Leal of Jerome, Idaho. She was preceded in death by her father, Joe E. Leal and niece, Aimee Amado.

Viewing will be held on October 5, 2021 at St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church from 9:00 to 9:30 a.m. Rosary will start at 9:30 a.m. Mass will immediately follow. J. Warren Funeral Services is in charge of arrangements.