

Rosemary (Willett) Vance



Rosemary (Willett) Vance, age 88, passed away on August 7, 2021 in Chandler, Arizona. Rosemary was born on December 11, 1932 on a farm in Indiana, to Gresham and Hazel Willett. Rosemary is survived by four children, Susan (Gary), Terri (Woody), Steve (Dawn), Lori (Greg); 10 grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren; and a sister. She was preceded in death by her husband, Ronald Vance; her parents; and two brothers.

Rosemary spent her formative years on the family farm, riding her beloved horse, Bill, and graduating from New Market High School in Indiana. After graduation she went to work for the Phone Book Company in Crawfordsville, Indiana. This is where she met her future husband, Ron, and they married on July 27, 1952. Eventually the young couple settled in Plainfield, Indiana and started their family.

Following career opportunities, the family relocated to Tempe, Arizona in 1967 – a very different place from their Midwest roots! But life was full and busy with four kids, lots of pets and exploring their new home state. While there were various types of pets over the years, her favorites were the Dobermans. Rosemary loved her “Dobies” – and they loved her back, with loyalty and devotion.

For their 25th wedding anniversary, Ron surprised Rosemary with a red Porsche sports car. She loved that car and drove Porsches for many years – participating in rallies and races, even winning a few! And, although she did not initially share Ron’s love of flying, her “emergency landing training” turned into flying lessons and Rosemary earned her private pilot’s license. She was a founding member of the Arizona chapter of “The 99s”, a club for female pilots. Rosemary and Ron enjoyed flying together for many years and when Ron hung up his pilot’s wings, Rosemary did, too.

Rosemary worked as an admin on and off while raising the family, eventually starting her own business, typing for college students and business owners. She built her business through word of mouth, referrals, and loyal customers.

Rosemary moved to Snowflake AZ with Ron, where they built their dream retirement home. Rosemary took up golf, trained and competed in dog agility contests, and learned how to quilt. She made beautiful quilts and many a family member benefited from Rosemary’s quilting efforts. There was travel, too, visiting family and friends and seeing much of this great country. Eventually Rosemary and Ron moved to Maricopa, AZ to be closer to family and lived there until Ron’s death in December 2020.

Rosemary will be remembered for her passion and zest for life – there was never a dull moment while in her presence! Always “up” for an adventure, a trip, or even a game or puzzle – she was an inspiration to family and friends to live life to the fullest. May her spark live on in those that loved her.

A Remembrance Service for both Rosemary and Ron Vance will be held on November 6, 2021 at 2 p.m., First Christian Church, 2720 S. Dorsey Lane, Tempe, AZ.