



Rita M. Butler

October 31, 1924 - November 20, 2019

BUTLER, Rita Marie (Alexander). Rita was born on October 31, 1924 in Spencer, West Virginia. Her childhood in West Virginia was during the time of oil wells and riverboats, country roads and beautiful scenery. Her father, J. Guy Alexander worked in the family business of oil production. Rita's mother, Alice Dwyer Alexander, was a teacher and earned her college degree at the age of 59 and was always Rita's role model. Her older brother, Jack watched out for her, even making sure she had someone to walk home with after Spencer High School dances. Her older sister, Jeanne made sure she played school every summer. Her younger brother, Sam joined her in climbing trees and stealing apples, and enhanced her reputation as a tomboy. And her younger sister, Margaret Ann won all of their hearts. Rita played basketball in high school where she won the most valuable player award her junior and senior year. Rita loved growing up in West Virginia and would return there many times for family reunions.

Rita loved to dance. She attended Potomac State School of West Virginia University where she was chosen best female dancer by her class. She danced every chance she got. She danced in the clubs and hotel ballrooms to the sounds of the Big Bands when she lived in NYC. Rita married her husband, Donald B. Butler in 1949. She made sure he took dance lessons so he could always dance with her. Her favorite dance was the jitterbug.

Rita was adventurous. She interviewed to be a stewardess during her junior year at Western Reserve in Cleveland. She flew for American Airlines from 1945 to 1949. Her route was from NYC to Dallas. Rita told stories about meeting famous people and movie stars but was most impacted by trying to make the injured soldiers coming home from WWII comfortable. Rita enjoyed operas, plays, and of course dancing in NYC, a long way from Spencer, West Virginia. Rita met her husband, Don at Harvard Business School when she flew up to Boston to visit with her brother, Jack.

Rita loved babies. She has four children: Mary (Roy Berger), Margo (Tom Reisinger), Don (Shirlee) and Bob (Raylaine). She was an expert on baby care and breast feeding which she learned from her mother, Alice. She loved passing on this advice and helping to take care of her seven grandchildren: John, Michael, Laura, Nick, Don, Ken, and Kimi. Rita has 15 great grandchildren who knew her as Grandma Rita. One of the highlights of this last

year was when she was able to cradle in her arms the two baby boys born in April and May.

Rita loved to travel. She traveled with her children around the United States on Don's business trips. She made sure they experienced the history and the beauty of this country. Rita met her brothers and sisters all over the country for family reunions, where there was always a bridge game in progress. She traveled with other ex-stewardesses living in Dayton to Kiwi conventions in Dallas and Las Vegas. Rita traveled with Don and later with her sister, Jeanne, to many of the countries in Western Europe, as well as Morocco, and Tunisia where she took part in an international bridge tournament. Rita and Jeanne came in second. At the age of 87, Rita traveled to China and Hong Kong with Jeanne and a group of college students from Shepherdstown, West Virginia.

When Rita was having trouble with her memory this last year and was reminded about the story of her life, she said she wished she could do it all over again and hoped she made a difference. Rita made a big difference in the lives of her family. Rita would say the secret to a good life would be to value family, trust in God, appreciate where you come from, be adventurous, make a difference, explore the world, and of course, don't forget to dance. We would like to thank the wonderful care givers at Brighton Gardens and Hospice who took such loving care of Rita. Peggy and her crew made Rita so beautiful for her 95th birthday party.

Friends and family may visit from 9:30am-10:30am on Saturday, November 30 at Westbrock Funeral Home, 5980 Bigger Rd, Kettering. Mass of Christian Burial at 11:00 am at Church of the Incarnation. Rita will then be laid to rest in Calvary Cemetery. If desired memorial donations may be made to Hospice of Dayton in her memory.

Cemetery

Calvary Cemetery

1625 Calvary Drive
Dayton, OH, 45409

Events

NOV 30 Visitation 09:30AM - 10:30AM

Westbrock Funeral Home
5980 Bigger Road, Kettering, OH, US, 45440

NOV 30 Mass of Christian Burial 11:00AM

Church of the Incarnation
7415 Far Hills Ave, Centerville, OH, US, 45459

Comments



“ The Dayton Kiwis are very saddened to hear that Rita passed away. Each one of us loved Rita's friendship & we sure did build a lot of wonderful memories together over the years She was a true lady, always smiling & yes she loved to dance. We send our thoughts & prayers to her loving family. We all feel so lucky to have shared many good times with Rita. God Bless Rita. We Love You - Brenda, Chris, Pat, Lorraine, Kay & Sue

Brenda Nolan - November 24, 2019 at 12:55 PM



“ Cherriann purchased the Beautiful Heart Bouquet for the family of Rita M. Butler.



Cherriann - November 24, 2019 at 12:31 PM