



## Bettye Ann Jennings

July 6, 1937 - January 23, 2026

Bettye Ann Jennings, 88, of Leesburg, Florida, passed away peacefully on January 23, 2026. Bettye was born on July 6, 1937, in Tupelo, Mississippi, to parents Jewell Morrow and Julian Acree and moved with her family to Memphis, Tennessee at the age of 12. She attended White Haven High School and began working in a local drugstore, where she met her first husband, George P. Spencer. The two married in 1955 and began their life together, living in Los Angeles, California before eventually returning to New York. Bettye later married Norman Jennings in 1985. Together, with the help of her son Andrew, they built a beloved home on Cayuga Lake in Trumansburg, New York. Bettye took great pride in creating a warm and inviting home, known for her exceptionally tasteful decorating style and her love of antique furniture. She became well known for her warmth, hospitality, and vibrant social spirit, hosting countless gatherings, fundraisers, and memorable celebrations both in her home and through her work at the Ithaca Senior Center, where she served as a receptionist for many years. Her outgoing personality and genuine kindness made her a familiar and welcoming presence to all who visited. Following her retirement, Bettye and Norm moved to Leesburg, Florida, where they enjoyed life in the Lakes at Leesburg community. True to her nature, Bettye remained active and engaged, participating in community events and performing as part of the Lakes at Leesburg dance troupe. Bettye is survived by her children, Andrew Spencer of Waltham, Massachusetts, and Anne Thompson of Dallas, Texas, as well as

her nephew, Jonathan Sehring of New York. She was preceded in death by her sons, Henry Spencer of Ithaca, New York, and John Spencer of Eagle Bay and New York City, her mother Jewel Morrow, father, Julian Acree, and a brother, Gene Acree, as well as many extended family who loved and cared for her. In her early years in Tupelo and Memphis, Bettye shared a unique connection with music history. She grew up alongside Elvis Presley and was proud to have helped introduce his music by playing his first record publicly at the Memphis State Fair Cotton Festival at his request. She was also a friend, neighbor and classmate of Dickey Lee, a celebrated performer and member of the Songwriters Hall of Fame who appeared on the Grand Ole Opry and wrote and performed numerous hit songs recorded by himself and many well-known artists since the 1950s. Alongside her close friend Della Vescovy, Bettye shared many joyful memories from that vibrant time. Bettye will be remembered for her generous spirit, her love of bringing people together, her eye for beauty and design, and her ability to make everyone feel welcome. Her legacy lives on in the many friendships she nurtured and the family she cherished. A celebration of life will be announced at a future date. In lieu of flowers, donations may be sent to: ST. JUDE CHILDREN'S RESEARCH HOSPITAL 262 Danny Thomas Place Memphis, TN 38105.

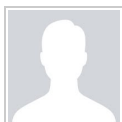
# Tribute Wall

GM

“*Condolences on the death of Bettye, my dear cousin. Among my memories of her and my most cherished is a night she spent the night with us in the late 40's She slept with me, i was 4 years old and she was 11. I had a nightmare in the middle of the night screaming that there were snakes in the bed. She calmed me down and told me it was a nighmare that they were not really there. I trusted what she said and for an 11 year old, looking back that was such a kind thing to do. When whe got out of school and got married and moved away I lost track of her, but reconnected with her through facebook a few years ago. We spent a lot of time on the phone talking about family, our lives, our children, and I was so glad that I found her again. i am so glad that we reconnected and were about to spend time talking to each other for a few years before she died and catching up on the family and our lives. I will miss our conversations so much. But we will meet again someday, and then it will be forever. RIP my dear cousin, I will think of you often and miss you even more!!!! Anne and Andrew, you had a wonderful mother and I am so sad at her passing. Love and prayers, Geri Acree Maxwell*

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**Geri Acree Maxwell** - April 29 at 03:26 PM



*Thank you so much for sharing that memory. I love picturing my mom comforting you like that—it sounds so much like her. It really means a lot to hear these stories.*

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**Anne Thompson** - May 01 at 11:35 PM