



Mari C Rotker

May 22, 1931 - November 14, 2021

TAVARES - Mari C. Rotker (Formerly from Deltona), 90, died Nov. 14, 2021. She was born May 22, 1931, in New York City to Sigmund Banashefsky and Phyllis Vabrinsky.

Mari is survived by her children Michael Rotker, and Margo Bernath and her husband, John. She was preceded in death by her husband of 65 years, Martin; her parents and brother Lou Banashefsky.

Mari held various jobs throughout the years. She retired as a bookkeeper in 1987 having helped build a wholesale/retail supply business up from a mom/pop business into a small corporation.

After retirement, Mari and her husband moved to upstate NY where she took up painting. They later relocated 31-years ago to Deltona Florida. Mari moved in with her daughter in 2021 after her husband's death.

Mari was a talented and complex woman. She had an astute business mind, was creative and a ravenous reader, loved children and animals and was extraordinarily generous to family, friends and strangers. Mari was deeply religious and prayed 3-hours each day. She was also a talented cook and was able to magically transform a few ingredients into magnificent meals.

She enjoyed bingo at American Legion Post 127 in Lake Helen. While there (for years), Mari supplied most of the cookies and candy at the bingo sessions as well as gifts and specialty items for players during themed events for Mothers and Fathers day celebrations and Easter. She purchased and amassed gifts throughout the year so members could enjoy their annual Christmas celebration. Though she was too modest to ever tell anyone she did this - it was always done through love and brought her great joy.

For years she hosted a weekly girls poker game at her house on Wednesdays. She also belonged to "The 31 Club" - women of the American Legion Post who were born in 1931.

Mari enjoyed the company, love and respect of many friends. However, for Mari, friends quickly became family - such was her capacity to love. She was a warm and welcoming woman.

Mari had a brief illness and passed away in Tavares Florida with family by her side. The 31 Club has lost another member, her family has lost its guiding star and heaven is blessed with another angel. She will be forever loved.

In Lieu of Flowers, donations may be made in her name to the children or animal charity of your choice. Beyers funeral home is in charge.

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Eulogy from Margo Bernath:

At 9:51 AM on November 14th, I officially became an orphan and joined the ranks of countless others who have lost both parents. My mother, my best friend, confidant and partner in crime passed at age 90. My father was 92 when he passed in 2020. They were my reason for early retirement and my relocation to Florida to care for them. Being a full-time caregiver for 4-years is

not easy though I would have gladly done it for 20 if that would have kept them with me.

Both were extraordinary in their own rights and each imparted important life lessons. My mother taught by example and set the bar high. Whether by intent or accidental good fortune, she was a powerful teacher. From her I learned compassion and unwavering honesty. As well, I learned generosity of spirit, giving and love. She is a tough act to follow but she lit the flame that now burns brightly in my soul.

My pain is raw and though expected, remains unfathomable. As I sat bedside keeping vigil while she began her final journey, I watched her take each ragged breath and marveled at her continued strength and dignity.

It doesn't matter if the focus of a caregiver's efforts is a parent, child, friend.... We all seek the same thing - peace for our loved one and an easy transition. The truth is that death is rarely peaceful, often messy and filled with struggles whether those caused by the emotions of the family struggling to accept the impending loss or of the patient struggling to survive while fatigued by a body that has betrayed them. The best we can do is transcend our own fear and offer peace and compassion even as we second guess our decisions. 20/20 hindsight is not the savior it would appear to be.

We know intellectually that death often brings the blessing of relief from pain. Regardless, we tend to feel our loved ones left too soon. Families and friends must transcend pain of grief and learn to reconnect to love via memories, albeit absent the physical person. The trick is to not become so tangled in memories and waves of grief that we are left unable to live our own lives. This phase requires strength and has its own timeline as unique as the person experiencing it.

Everyone experiences loss. My mother had her share of pain, sorrow, and setbacks that she overcame. As I said before, part of her legacy was strength. I shall overcome as well, refocus my life and shift from sorrow to celebration.

This brings me back to my presence at my mother's death. Despite my fear, I was profoundly grateful that fate allowed me to bring comfort and bear witness during her transition out of this life while providing her with the same unconditional love during this farewell as she gave me when she welcomed me into this life - The cycle is now complete.

I will continue with her legacy and teach by action and example as my mother did. This missive marks the beginning of that journey. For those who joined me to its end thank you for reading this. I love you mom. I always have and I always will.

~~~ Margo