



Betty Jane Tipton

FEB 14, 1929 - MAY 21, 2025



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Betty Jane Tipton

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Betty Jane was born on February 14, 1929 in Washington, D.C. and grew up in Germantown, Maryland. She had two brothers Jim and Jay and a sister Eula. When she was six, she was given a beagle as a birthday present, who became her faithful friend and companion. When she was 16, she got her first job in the US Government, and bought her family their first television for a Christmas present with her first month's pay check. She rode the train to DC and back every day to work and that's how she met Mary who wanted to introduce her to her brother, Charles, and so she did. Betty was good-looking and stylish. She knew how to sew and could really put on the 9s. She got married to Charles Muzzy Tipton and thereafter she was a Tipton. She sewed her honeymoon clothes and Mr. Charles and Mrs. Betty Tipton moved from the East Coast to the Midwest, so Charles could go to graduate school on the GI bill; first in Illinois, then to Massachusetts, and on to Iowa, where the family settled in Iowa City. 'Bets' as she loved to be called, was busy raising four rambunctious kids, Teresa, Paula, Barbara and Lisa while Charles was busy becoming a renowned Exercise Physiologist. There is a saying that behind every great man is a great woman, and Bets was no exception. She even typed Charles' thesis the seven times his advisor told him to revise it. While they were in Illinois, she made pocket money ironing clothes and looking after other people's children. She loved to listen to Barbara Streisand records and Broadway musicals while cleaning, and often sang along. In Iowa, she worked as a Secretary in the Exercise Physiology Office and volunteered at the Mercy Hospital. Later, she worked at the University of Iowa Registrar's Office and became Manager of Mercy Hospital's Gift Shop, where she discovered and brought home many wonderful little things. One of them turned out to be Pat, who came into Betty's heart in high school when she needed a place to stay. Betty adopted Pat as one of her own.



Obituary

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Betty loved clever little small things and put them together in her own decor. She had an eye for beauty and was one herself. Later when all the children were grown and gone from the house on Lexington Avenue, she and Charles moved to Tucson, Arizona, where he started new transdisciplinary programs and Bets found a place to start over, just the two of them. Finding a home with a view of the Catalina Mountains made her heart sing. She liked to garden and worked in whatever yard she and the family had, beautifying and landscaping as she did in Arizona, turning a desert into a Southwestern Oasis and even making a rose garden. She became an avid family genealogist, and sleuth detective of ancient ancestors back to the 1500s. She amassed over 50,000 records on Family Treemaker and became a citizen scholar on the subject of everything Tipton and Shewbridge across generations of stories, adventures, and pioneering. An avid reader, she kept up with the news and read every large print book the library had on biographies of people she admired. She liked to play bridge with friends and made many long-lasting ones especially from Iowa City, but none of them the longest as Becky Oelbermann, who remained a childhood friend from Germantown for more than 85 years. In Tucson, she began volunteering at Tohono Chul Gift Shop and liked to look for interesting art, wonderful antiques, and handmade treasures. She also earned a new nickname “Bobo” from her youngest grandson, little Charlie.

Her kindness to others, loyalty and persistence were the gold standard by which she valued not just friendships, but how you were to honorably conduct yourself as a person and as a human being. First of all – tell the truth, and besides being kind to others, you honor your word – because words matter. (Even if the word was spoken only to yourself.) But beyond the values of human decency, truth, honesty, and charity, one of the most enduring and spectacular generosity of pleasure she gave to all of us and so many other people for so many years, was the way she made birthdays and holidays special. But it was the way she made Christmas come alive every year of our lives as a special, magical surprise. What a treat it was run out the closed bedroom door and down the hall and see what ‘Santa Claus’ had left us under the tree, and of course read what Santa left in his note after he ate all the cookies baked just for his climb down the chimney. Stockings, toys, wrapped presents, treats, beautiful decorations, a gorgeous glittering tree, full of unique ornaments, and food – a whole table full of gorgeous, delicious foods, made to savor and devour all day. Special recipes and food that could only be eaten Christmas morning after going to midnight mass the night before. Betty Jane would spend the entire year (for decades) finding little treasures and wrapping them up, and putting them away, anticipating and preparing for the next delightful Christmas extravaganza! Christmas was a mythic day. Every year it was a one-of-a-kind treasure chest of excitement that ended with an annual Christmas treasure hunt for envelopes of hidden money!). And thus, Betty enshrined in our hearts an extravaganza of love and generosity, a tradition that continues in its own way and form today. Now shared with



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children's children, and expanding families of grandchildren, this last Christmas Betty celebrated with all the generations present.

Regardless of all the self-deprecations she may have felt about herself in her life over the years, it didn't erase the way she could light other people up. And Christmas was an extraordinary example of her skillful and thoughtful imagination of what would make other people happy. What would they like? And then she would do her best to make it, like the hand embroidered Christmas tablecloths she would spend months making as this year's big Christmas present to one of her daughters. Whether it was with a cashier at the grocery store, or a receptionist in a doctor's office, Betty would chat people up and share with them her news, even if they didn't know each other. She had this generosity that we all belonged to, and despite the failings of her own frailty that bothered her, kindness was something that she gave to everyone throughout her life, her laughter, and her smile that we remember the most. Because in the end, she was genuinely kind-hearted and loving. As angry as she could get and as frustrated as she became, deep inside through and through she was as good as they come. As a friend, she was a good listener. She remembered what was said and she thought about it some more. Some conversations stayed with her for years and she was always adding to them, trying to figure something out. Until she passed, she was always curious. And always wanting to problem-solve something to make it better for someone else. She sincerely always wanted to contribute to someone else's welfare, often as a sacrifice of her own. All in all, through thick and thin and thinly thick, it was her optimism that shone through, even in the last wink of her eye with the tiniest indication of a smirk, pretending to go along with someone else's wishes. Betty Jane Shewbridge Tipton passed peacefully in her sleep May 21, 2025 in her beloved home with beloved family around. Her last words would surely have been, "I love you all very much. Always have."

In lieu of flowers please consider a donation to the Community Food Bank of Southern Arizona; <https://donations@communityfoodbank.org> or 520-882-3300.



Tribute Wall

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Maria Baez posted:

Betty, what can I say other than what an inspiration you were in my life, I learned so much from you, from your special recipes to the wonderful way you talked about your family, all the stories that I loved to hear, I learned that no matter how hard things get, you never give up. You brought so much joy to my life, I grew as a person in patience in love and in thanking the lord for all the little things in life. You, Charlie your daughters and all your grandchildren are an example of what a family truly is, through good and bad you pull together to make things right. The 5 years I spent with you were enough to fill my heart with beautiful memories, memories I will never forget and cherish in my heart forever. Thank you for all the ways you helped me and my family, and for that beautiful smile that lightened up any room, I will always keep you in a special place in my heart, Love you forever Maria Baez and family.

July 27 at 10:11 PM



Maria Baez posted:

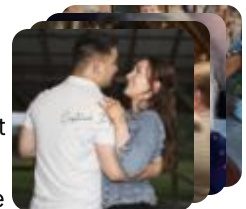
Betty, what can I say other than what an inspiration you were in my life, I learned so much from you, from your special recipes to the wonderful way you talked about your family, I learned that no matter how hard things get you never give up, you brought so much joy to my life, I grew as a person in patience, in love and in thanking the Lord for the little things in life, You, Charlie and all your grandchildren are an example of what a family truly is, through good and bad you pull together to make things right, the 5 years I spent with you were enough to fill my heart with beautiful memories, memories I will never forget and cherish in my heart forever. Thank you for all the ways you helped me and my family and for that beautiful smile that lightened up any room, I will always keep you in a special place in my heart, Love you forever, Maria Baez and family.

July 27 at 9:55 PM



Teresa Tipton shared 141 photos to the **Tribute Wall** album.

To all of the people whose lives you touched and cared for, and those whose to whom you gave birth, nurtured, and loved, and to those whose names we may not know, may you in turn, receive all the blessings of love, joy and light with eternal gratitude, enduring love, and a warm place in all of our hearts, ever more. We love you to the moon and back forever. Your first born, Teresa



July 12 at 10:02 AM



Tribute Wall

Betty Jane Tipton
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Lisa Yong shared 2 photos to the **Tribute Wall** album.

Charley

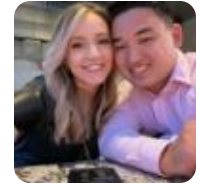
July 14 at 9:36 AM



Lisa Yong shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.

Chris and Maria

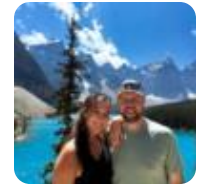
July 14 at 9:36 AM



Lisa Yong shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.

Maddie and Matt

July 14 at 9:35 AM



Lisa Yong shared 3 photos to the **Tribute Wall** album.

Julia and Tylor

July 12 at 10:02 AM



Lisa Yong shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.

Michael and Marissa

July 14 at 9:33 AM





Tribute Wall

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Lisa Yong shared 15 photos to the **Tribute Wall** album.

Betty's love for her grandchildren and great-grandchildren had no boundaries. Jesse Wallin with wife Charlotte. Their twins are Joshua Tipton and Gabriel Peter. (Houston, TX) Michael Day with fiancée Marissa (Salt Lake City, UT). Julia Wallin with husband Tylor Billings (Tucson, AZ). Rachel Day with husband Jared Armstrong. (Bend, OR) Maddie Sadecky with Fiancée Matt (Iowa City, IA), Chris Yong with fiancée Maria (Cincinnati, OH) , Charley Yong, (International Digital Nomad)



July 12 at 10:02 AM



Maddie S shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.

Love you grandma Betty! Will always miss you and cherish the memories made visiting you in Tucson and swimming in your pool before sitting around the table for a nice meal together.



July 12 at 10:02 AM



Media

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Teresa Tipton shared 141 photos to the **Tribute Wall** album.

July 14 at 12:45 PM





Media

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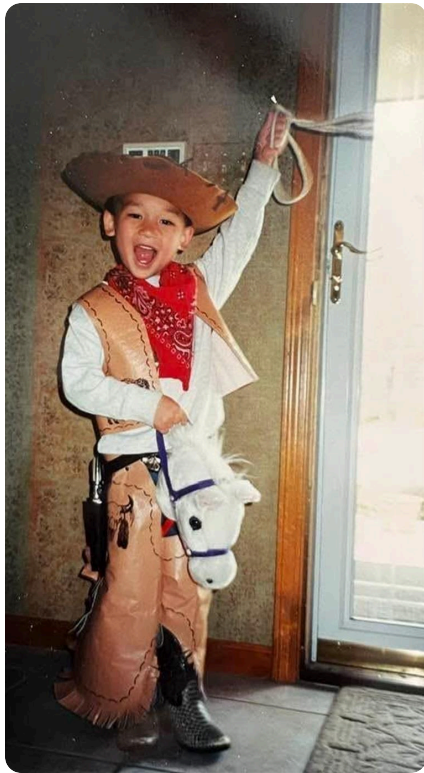
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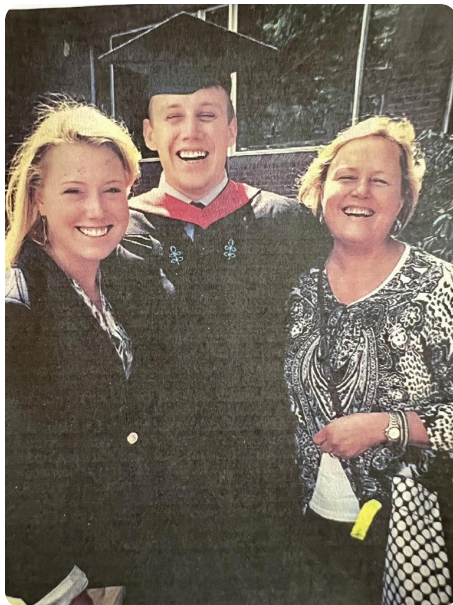
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Media

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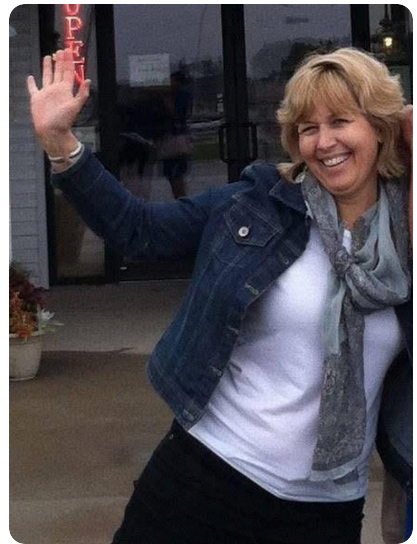
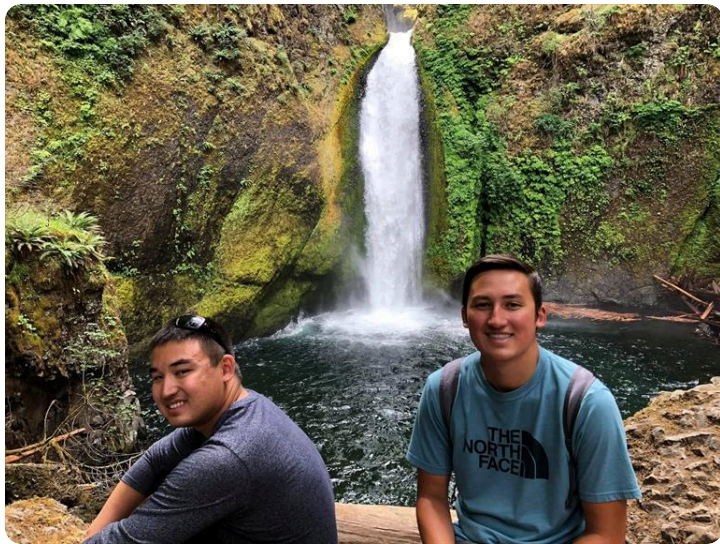
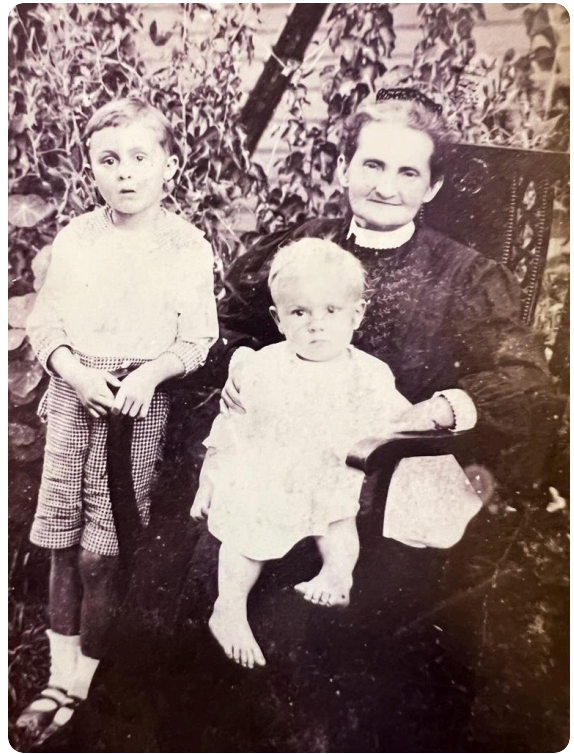
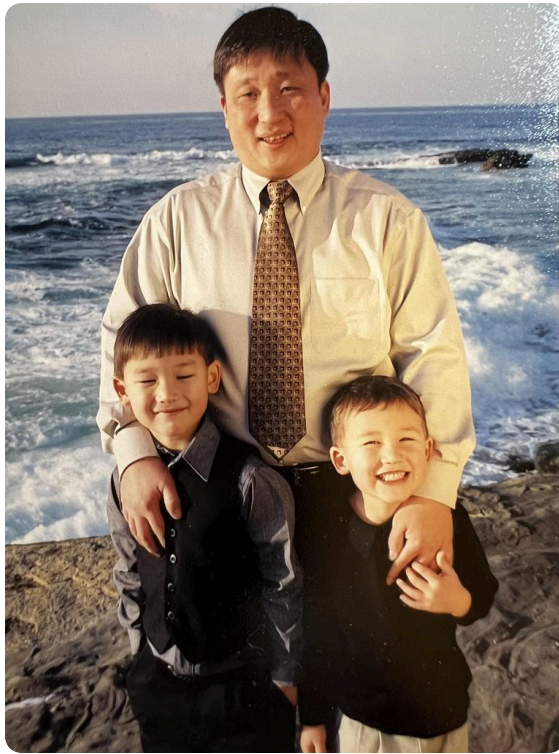
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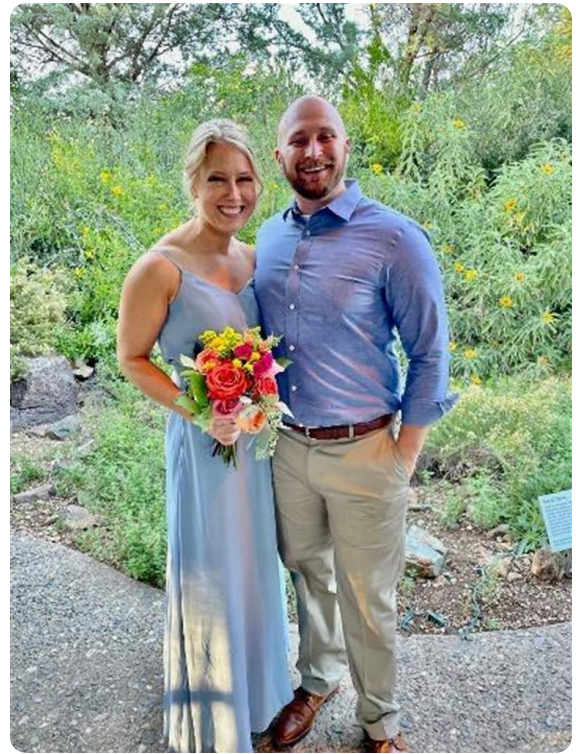
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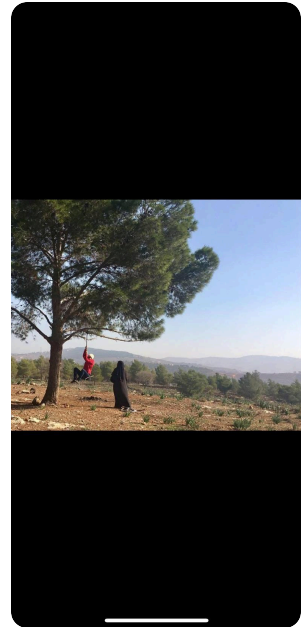
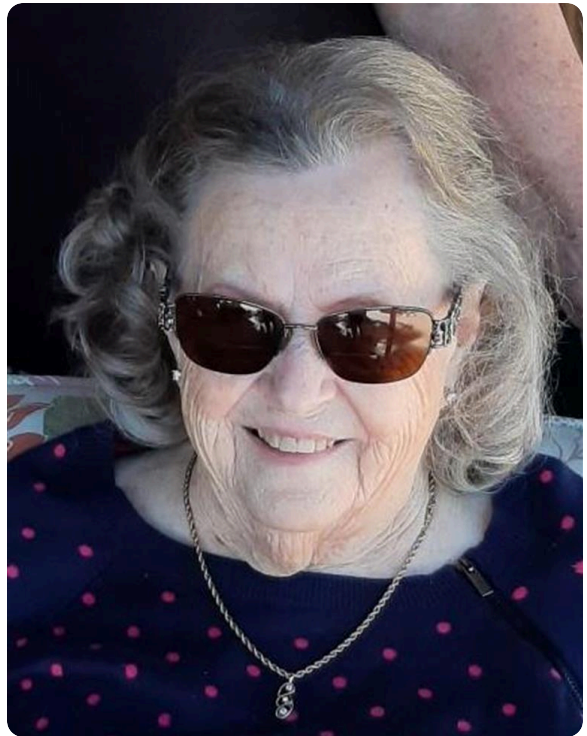
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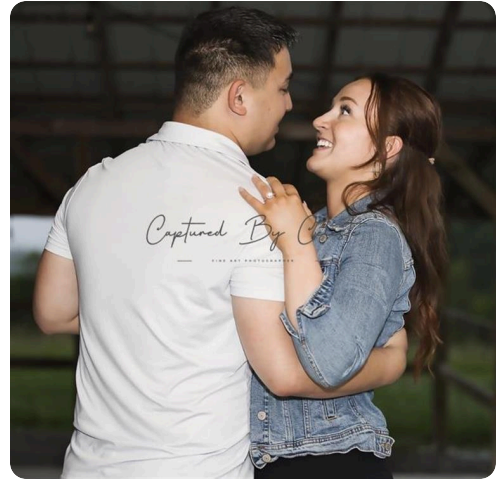
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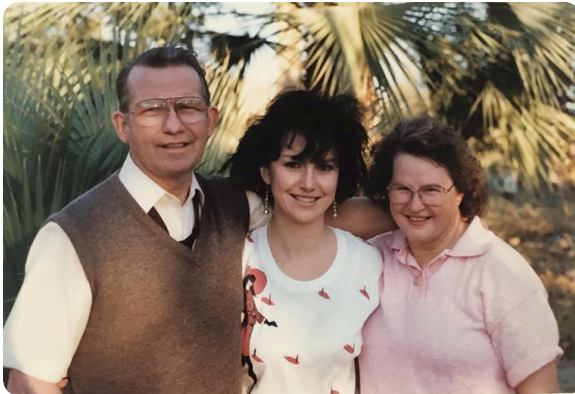
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Lisa Yong shared 2 photos to the **Tribute Wall** album.

July 14 at 9:36 AM





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July 14 at 9:34 AM





Media

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Lisa Yong shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.

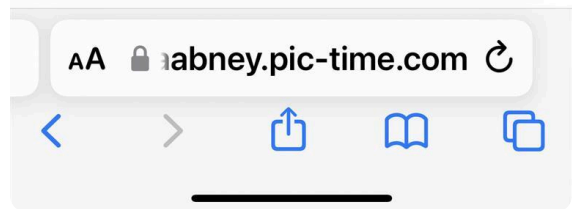
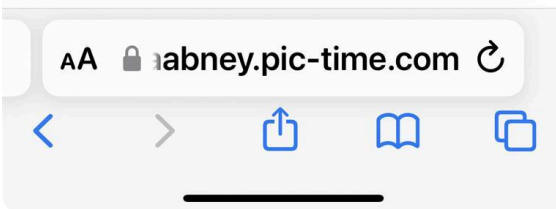
July 14 at 9:33 AM





Lisa Yong shared 15 photos to the **Tribute Wall** album.

July 14 at 9:30 AM





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1:32

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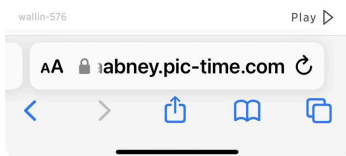
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Maddie S shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.

July 12 at 10:02 AM





Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Betty by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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