



Alma K. Vactor

July 7, 1925 - February 5, 2017

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Alma Kane Vactor was one of Tucson's all-time great Restaurateurs, an amazing Mother, incredible Grand Mother, wonderful Great Grand Mother and special friend to so many. She died Sunday. She recently suffered a serious fall with severe injuries and was unable to recover. She was 91 and still very sharp with an incredible memory. Originally from Cleveland (Shaker Heights), Ohio, she and her family moved to Tucson in 1960 where she had been a winter visitor for more than a decade. She joined her family's business, Rancho Del Rio Guest Ranch, by taking over the foodservice, using many of her own personal recipes and often being the Chef to feed all the guests and staff three meals plus snacks every day. In 1965, the Kane and Vactor families opened its guest ranch's excellent dining restaurant to the public and named it The Tack Room. It became one of the very few Mobil Travel Guide Five Star restaurants in the country and later was also awarded the AAA Five Diamond Award, the only restaurant in the west with both top awards. Many of her personal recipes and food service ideas remained a part of the restaurant's repertoire and she remained involved in its management.

She was married to her husband, David, for 40 years, until his untimely death in 1984. Along with Alma's brother, Jud Kane, David managed the guest ranch and then the restaurant. When Jud died in 1974, Alma and David's son, Drew, joined the family business as General Manager and eventually CEO until it was leased out in 2000. The property was sold for development and named Vactor Ranch in 2005.

During her time in Cleveland and in Tucson, she was the Mother from Central Casting, learning about everyone she met and remembering them, their families and usually their phone numbers without writing them down. She always took care of her family first but was also the ultimate caregiver when someone was ill or in trouble. She was a close friend to all.

In the late 1980's, with a quest for adventure, Alma qualified as a Cruise Hostess for Golden Bear Travel and led their groups on more than 100 cruises to ports around the world. In 1999, while in Singapore, she suffered a serious stroke and was restricted to a wheelchair. Although her cruising days were over, she kept her "CrznMma" license plate for many years while remaining active and fully in charge of her own affairs. Her memory was amazing. She always provided great advice and she had a great rapport with everyone she met. She was well-loved with many close friends in Tucson and friendships she had made around the world that she maintained via email.

Alma was predeceased by her parents Marvin and Fan Kane, brother Jud Kane, husband, David C. Vactor and two daughters, Wendy Vactor and Jill Gunzel and Jill's husband, Steve. She is survived by her son, Drew (Kandie) Vactor and her grandchildren Jon (Trina) Gunzel, Julie (Jeremy) Graff and Charlotte Watson and 7 Great Grand Children: Wyatt and Abbie Gunzel, Leslie, Adam, Baily and Warren Graff and Jessica Gilbert.

In recent years, her family also included her amazing team of incredible care givers who were true angels, providing exceptional personal and tender care: Lupe, Mari, Hilda, Ellie, Jackie, Terry, Patricia, Christy and Estella.

Private services will be held for the family.

Comments



“ Steve and Janet Holt purchased the Pink Potpourri Bouquet for the family of Alma K. Vactor.



Steve and Janet Holt - February 06, 2017 at 06:11 PM