

MELANIE JOAN RUSSELL



Melanie Joan Russell, age 81, passed away on Saturday, February 22, 2025, to be with her mother, Helen, in heaven. She is survived by her wife and life partner of 32 years, Christine Zarnich. Her sister, Diane Russell Pineda of MD; and predeceased brother-in-law, Hugo Pineda from Chile. As well as niece, Emi Ayala; nephew, David Ayala (Colleen) and their children, James, Miles, and Nina of MD. Lastly, her best friends, Liz

Pearce (Bill) of Columbia, MD, and Barbara Robinson of the North Side of Pittsburgh.

She was born in Rochester, NY, on October 5, 1943, to Helen and William (Bill) Russell, and like everyone else in Rochester, worked summers at Kodak, where she started her love of cameras, and all things related. While in college at Mt. Union, she met her life-long friend, Liz (Bill) Pearce, and from the 90's to last year she, Liz, Anne, and anyone else who would like to tromp off to the Edgewater Condominiums on the beach. They would go every year to Rehoboth Beach, DE. She would shop, shop, sit on the beach, and then shop some more, going from one shirt shop to the next t-shirt shop on Rehoboth Ave. So it was her wish to have her ashes spread there.

She is also survived by her rescued fur babies (cats), Big Guy who never left her side while she suffered from Lewy Body Dementia (LBD). Also, Diablo, Tuxedo, Tucker, and Silk. They, as everyone else, will miss her dearly.

She went to Mt. Union College (now University) in Ohio, for her undergraduate degree in History. In the late 60s, she received her master's degree in social work from Pitt. She started her career at Juvenile Court for a couple of years, being an advocate for the children. Retiring after 20 plus years from Goodwill Pittsburgh, from the 70s through the 90s on the South Side, as Personnel Director. Then working with the clients on many projects, and entrusted with Dom Care and many other programs.

Lastly she was an excellent seamstress who could take apart clothing and put back together again.

Arrangements entrusted to **READSHAW FUNERAL HOME, INC.**

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