



Paula Louise Axtell

JUN 5, 1944 - NOV 19, 2018



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Paula Louise Axtell (nee Mitchell) passed away peacefully in her sleep at her home in Bonita Springs, FL, on November 19, 2018. She was born on June 5, 1944, in Detroit, MI to James & Lillian (nee Cottrell) Mitchell. Paula's parents predeceased her in 1956 and 1992, respectively. Paula grew up primarily in Kenosha, WI as one of seven children who lost their father at an early age. She graduated from St. Joseph High School in Kenosha and then worked in administrative roles for American Motors to help support her family until her marriage to Tim Lawler III in 1964. She became the beloved mother to four children whom she devoted herself to raising. She would say that raising her kids was her life's pride and joy, a passion which continued into her final weeks and days. After her divorce, Paula started her own successful business to help raise and support her four children. She was a smart, driven and capable businesswoman known for her shrewd negotiating skills and trusted advisory role to her clients. In 1987, Paula met her match and great love, Dean Axtell. Their marriage in 1990 was one of loving devotion between the two. Together, they traveled the world while he was CEO of Trak International. By bringing Dean into her life, she also brought a special person into the lives of her children. He adored Paula and her children. They retired together, initially with homes in Scottsdale and Tucson before landing on Bonita Springs as their warm weather home. Dean and Paula enjoyed making countless memories while entertaining family and friends at their lake home in Oconomowoc, WI. She cared for Dean with ceaseless devotion through his battle with cancer until he passed away in 2006. She was fortunate to have found a loving partner in Jim Nelson, previously of Waukesha, WI, who served as her companion in life and love through her later years. Paula loved Jim deeply and their families were thankful that they found one another after each had lost their spouse. Jim brought a zest for living along with tireless energy and support to Paula through these years. She and Jim spent their time traveling between



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Bonita Springs, FL and Wisconsin, Illinois, and Texas visiting family. Paula also dearly loved her little Havanese dog, Chico, who traveled with them and rarely left her side. She was immensely proud of her four children and ten grandchildren. Her children loved her deeply as did her grandchildren. Paula was a great cook and passed many of her favorite recipes on to her children and grandchildren. Paula had a close, loving bond with her six siblings that started in their shared childhood. The sibling group loved one another and continued to keep up their relationships through various lively family gatherings. She had a fantastic sense of humor with a quick wit and she loved to laugh. She was always up for an adventure or family get together. Paula also loved reading and would rarely be caught without a book or newspaper close at hand. She particularly loved learning about different times and places through the books she read. She inspired this same intense love of reading and learning in each of her children and in many of her grandchildren. She is survived by her partner, Jim Nelson; four children Marianna (John) Kurzydlo of Deerfield, IL, Amy (Mark) Seiler of Charlotte, NC, Sheila (Ryan) Flaherty of Frisco, TX, and Tim (Lynn) Lawler IV of Lake Forest, IL; 10 grandchildren Lauren, Lily & Anna Kurzydlo, Taylor (Steve) Sutton, Patrick & Aidan Flaherty, and Clare, Charlotte, Timothy & Ian Lawler; and her six siblings Jean, Brian, Mike, Mary, Richard and Kathy...and of course, her cherished dog Chico. Immediate funeral ceremonies are private. A memorial gathering will be held on Saturday, December 22 at 1:00pm at The Golden Mast Inn, W349 N5293 Lacy's Lane, Okauchee, WI 53069. Those who wish to do so may make memorial donations to the Barbara Bush Foundation for family literacy: www.barbarabush.org.Arrangements for Paula's final care have been entrusted to Fort Myers Memorial Gardens Funeral Home, 1589 Colonial Boulevard, Fort Myers, Florida 33907, (239) 936-0555. To share a story or photo, leave a tribute or to offer condolences to the family at this difficult time please visit Paula's memorial webpage at www.fortmyersmemorial.com and sign her guestbook.



Tribute Wall

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Tim Lawler Iii posted:

Sincere sympathies to Paula's brothers and sisters, and her four wonderful children.

November 23 at 1:42 PM



Memories only last if you share them

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



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