



Antonia H. Montanez

JUN 13, 1925 - JAN 21, 2018



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Antonia “Toni” Hernandez Montanez’s spirit left to her eternal Heavenly home to be surrounded by God’s love, peace and joy, on January 21, 2018. She passed peacefully while under Hospice Care in her daughter’s home with both her children standing by her. Toni was born on June 13, 1925 in San Lorenzo, Puerto Rico to Cruz Flores Diaz and Martin Diaz. Her blissful childhood ended in 1930, when her mother died from complications from giving birth to her little brother, Martin. She was raised by an older half sister, her brother was raised by various ladies. They seldom saw each other. Toni left Puerto Rico in 1943 for New York City, arriving in Miami, Fl.. she had never encountered segregation and was appalled and saddened by it. In Puerto Rico, there weren’t color barriers. She was pleased that in New York there was little in the way of such behaviors. While living in New York, she encountered the older brother of her best childhood friend, Pedro Hernandez Montanez, who courted her and later became her husband. They had a daughter and a son. In 1953 the family moved to Cleveland, Ohio, seeking a quieter and safer place to raise their children. Toni went to work in an aluminum producing factory where the sounds of huge machines cutting and shaping aluminum into trays, bread boxes and canisters for sugar, coffee and flour terrified her, but she stayed there for twenty years. She saw the abuses of bosses against the employees, she made it her goal to bring in the union for bargaining power against the injustices she witnessed on a daily basis. In 1958 the Union was voted in and Toni became its first president. She was re-elected three times. Toni was always there to protect anyone who needed it. She was a caretaker who provided for friends, neighbors and strangers. She bought clothes, food, cribs, found housing and jobs for dozens of people, but her family always came first. She made sure we had an immaculate home, home cooked meals, seven days a week, clean clothes. She was overjoyed when she and Pedro were finally able to purchase a house. In 1977 Toni and Pedro followed their daughter and her family to



Ft. Myers, Fl. They were both retired and able to enjoy spending much of their time together with their two grandchildren. They went to every school and sporting event they could. Toni loved her children but she adored her grandchildren! When she was blessed with great grandchildren she was over the moon, they became her everything. Her greatest joy in life was having her family together and cooking all their favorite food. She shared her traditions, stories of her life and country. Her passing has left a huge void in the lives of her family, friends and neighbors. She was strong willed, direct, generous, kind, funny and took pride in all she did. She was fearless, prayerful and loving. She loved music and dancing and we all believe that if there's a ballroom in Heaven she and Pedro will be dancing and laughing as they did in their earthly lives. Antonia was predeceased by Pedro Hernandez Montanez, her husband of 42 years; Granddaughters Katie and Elizabeth Beno (stillborn March 23, 1979). She is survived by her daughter, Evelyn (Hernandez Beno) Stetson , son-in-law, John Stetson; Son, Peter Hernandez , daughter-in-law Poly Mavridou; Grandchildren: Rachel Beno Priebe (Jason) Brian Robert Beno (Laura) Adam Michael Beno Katerina Mavridou-Hernandez; Great grandchildren: Catherine Elizabeth Priebe, Ian Jacob Priebe, Sophia Collette Beno, Lucas Charles Beno. The family wishes to extend profound gratitude to Team 130 of Joanne's Hospice, their support and kindness will never be forgotten. Please make contributions to them in lieu of flowers or to St. Jude's Children's Hospital. Memorial Services to be held, Saturday, February 17, 2018 10:30A.M. Interment to follow Ft. Myers Memorial Gardens 1589 Colonial Blvd.



Memories only last if you share them

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



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