



Susan Rose Mantonya

November 27, 1943 - November 7, 2020

Susan Rose Mantonya (nee Wargo), 76, of Grayslake, IL, died peacefully at home on November 7, 2020.

She was born November 27, 1943 in Columbus, Ohio – the daughter of Louis and Helen Wargo. Small family trips and laughs with her cousins were among Sue’s greatest joys growing up. As an only child (and her cousin Kit also without siblings), she often said they were like sisters, and definitely “soulmates” at heart.

While employed in a civilian position at the Defense Construction Supply Center, in Columbus, Ohio, she met Lt. Robert Mantonya, who would become her husband of 47 years. Bob’s military career allowed the family to visit Germany, Spain, and England, where Sue loved the castles, gardens, and beautiful landscapes. Bob & Sue packed up house and kids to live in Maryland, California, and even a few years abroad in Iceland, before settling into the Libertyville, IL community.

From Libertyville, Sue embraced her job as a teacher’s aide at Hawthorn Middle School (1984-2003, in Vernon Hills, IL). There she loved the students, the bulletin boards she decorated for seasonal and special events, and, most of all – she loved her colleagues, the teachers. Many became her dearest friends. It was a difficult decision for her eventually to leave work due to rising

health issues.

In her retirement, Susan remained empathetic to anyone in need. She was a soft target for those seeking donated clothing, household goods, and financial support - including wounded veterans, food for the hungry, battered women, March of Dimes, and, most of all, stray or rescued animals. She took great joy in being assigned a child needing gifts for the holidays, and had fun coming home to show off her selected purchases.

Later in life, Sue discovered a deep love of gardening and flowers. She could never have too many birdhouses, cute lawn statues, or hanging plants. Quietly purchasing new plants whenever one died, she appeared to have a master green thumb, making the yard her oasis. Even when she could no longer do the work physically, just being able to sit surrounded by beauty was a balm to her heart.

Susan survived almost 20 years of cancer and other health issues, sometimes with heroic strength, and always reliant on her deep faith in Jesus Christ. She got just a few final years to enjoy the trees and meadows surrounding her Saddlebrook home in Grayslake, IL, which had been a longstanding dream. She is survived by her husband, Bob Mantonya; her children, Valerie Starr, Michelle Mantonya and Michael (Maritza) Mantonya; cousins Kitson Steiff and Julie Greene; and her beloved rescue dog, Lily.

A Celebration of Life will be arranged at a later date. Memorial contributions would be appreciated to the Reach Rescue Organization (<https://www.reachrescue.org/donations>) on her behalf. For info: 847-362-3009 or share a memory at www.burnettdane.com.

Tribute Wall

PL

“ Sue was one of my dearest friends. Over the years we have shared many memories and much laughter. She was devoted to God and her family. Through all of her adversities she remained positive and faithful. Christmas was one of her favorite times of the year, and she spent time shopping for gifts for that special child or family that was in need. Sue truly had a heart of gold. Everyone who knew her thought the same. She touched many lives with her faith and positivity. Her love of flowers and gardening was unsurpassed. Her yard was filled with beauty! That beauty flowed from within her spirit. There will never be a day that goes by that I am not touched by a thought or memory of her. I know that she is with God and he has called her home to an eternal life filled with flowers and love. I love you Sue and miss you, yet I feel your spirit with me as I journey on.

Your forever friend, Pam

Pamela Lutter - December 07, 2020 at 03:15 AM

MM

“ Every year my mom loved to choose a child or family who was in need so she could buy them gifts for Christmas. She always went above and beyond and got so excited about the items she CAREFULLY and PAINSTAKINGLY picked out for them. This year, she received the name and list of her little boy's wants and needs on the same day that she passed. At the time, this was a very heartbreaking moment for me. To see the list and to know that she would not get the joy of being able to pick out the items for that child was so sad.

Yesterday was Thanksgiving. Today was my mom's birthday. These were two incredibly difficult days without her around. But then I remembered the little boy and the list. I don't know if I had as much fun as my mom used to have when she went out, but it definitely helped me to feel connected to her as I looked at each item and "asked Sue" what she thought. She might not physically be here, but it's so awesome that she's still able to touch others' lives- strangers even- because of her kind heart and giving spirit.

Michelle Mantonya - November 28, 2020 at 01:22 AM

BM

“ 3 files added to the tribute wall



Bob Mantonya - November 16, 2020 at 03:48 PM

MD

“ 1 file added to the album *Memories Album*



Marcee Dane - November 13, 2020 at 02:04 PM