



## Cheryll Lynette Stillwell Cain

April 25, 1948 - July 22, 2020

Our Sweet Jesus mercifully summoned my Beloved Momma, Cheryll Lynette Stillwell Cain, to her eternal resting place, July 22nd, 2020, at 10:36 a.m. He has wiped every tear from her eyes and suffering will be no more ~ Glory Hallelujah!

Life has a peculiar way of throwing a lot of very difficult challenges our way and Cheryll was no stranger to the fiery darts, but “Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?” Thanks be to God, Who gives us our Victory through Christ Jesus, our Lord, Amen!

Dementia stole Cheryll’s mind, Myasthenia Gravis stole her nerves and muscles, Covid-19 stole her breath, but nothing; not death, nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers in the sky above or in the earth below could steal her from The Love of God that is in Christ Jesus!

Momma never feared “death”, and over the past year, in fact, welcomed it. She trusted Jesus and His promises of eternal life with Him! She was more than ready to throw off her ill-fitting suit and gladly welcome the fine linens of the imperishable.

The family and I thank you all for your fervent and faithful prayers over her as

she transitioned from earth to Heaven. It was on the wings of those prayers that she flew mercifully into The Arms of our Jesus.

We want to thank you for stopping by and would like to share a bit of Cheryll's 72 years of life with you. May her memory be forever ingrained in the sands of time as her life matters; just as each and every one of yours does!

Cheryll Lynette Stillwell, was born on April 25th, 1948, in Mercedes, TX, to Tawana "Toni" Louise Stillwell, who eventually owned and operated "The Elbow Room" in Donna, TX. Though I do not know the exact lineage, I was always told by my grandmother, Toni, whom I affectionately called "Gammer", that she was "a quarter Cherokee Indian" (my mom's grandmother and grandfather were born, respectively, in Wirt and Springer, Oklahoma). That explained the gorgeous, deep, sun-kissed skin tones of the beautiful women of my maternal line, and the silvery white crowns adorning the heads of my aged matriarchs; Momma, included! From an early age Cheryll was immersed in Scripture, a strong work ethic, a family of gifted guitarists and vocalists, good country and bluegrass music, and the best southern cookin' you've ever tasted!

Shortly after Cheryll was born, her mom, Toni, returned to her job working with migrants packing (mostly) tomatoes in California. As a result of my grandmother's work out of state, in the early years of my mother's life, she stayed behind in Donna, TX; raised in tandem by her grandmother, Thelma Mae Stillwell, affectionately called, "Nanny"; her grandfather, Houston Albert "H.A." Stillwell, affectionately called "Paw-Paw", and numerous aunts and uncles. While Cheryll's mom was working in California, Nanny ran a tight ship and ruled with a strong hand, a Bible on the table, and a switch always within close reach. Nanny believed strong discipline was the key to raising respectful, God-fearing children.

As a young girl my mom would often accompany her mother in California, who shared living arrangements with beloved migrant workers from Mexico. As a result of those close friendships, as a young child she, and her mom, became fluent in Spanish, and the preparation of amazing, authentic Mexican food! By the time Cheryl was a young teen, (and her mom had returned to Donna and opened The Elbow Room), she could speak and understand Spanish, worked for her mom in the family tavern, could pick a mean guitar, grow a vegetable garden, can everything from tomatoes to peaches, cook nearly everything from fresh fish stew sourced out of The Arroyo to mouthwatering frijoles borrachos, Spanish rice, fresh fruit pies, moist cakes, and relished singing along with members of featured bands at The Jungle Inn. She was raised on the likes of artists like Merle Haggard, Patsy Cline, George Jones, Dolly Parton, Waylon Jennings, Willie Nelson, Charley Pride, and Loretta Lynn. There was always a tune in her head, a song on her lips, and she knew the lyrics to just about every country song ever written.

In 1971, my mother met my father, Kim Frase Johnson, while working at her mother's bar, The Elbow Room, in Donna, TX. It was a fun and welcoming hangout for the locals and even young, sharp-shooters, like my dad. He was quite the pool shark, often barreling to pay for that night's dinner or the next day's lunch. He rarely ever lost a game and that, along with his fun-loving charisma and quick wit, caught my Momma's eye! He and my mom enjoyed day trips over the border to eat fried frog legs and drink margaritas, bird hunting, fishing at the coast, dancing at the local Jungle Inn, and playing Hearts & Spades with friends. My father was attracted to the nurturer in my mom and they married soon after starting their courtship, in December of 1971. Shortly after, my Daddy joined the United States Air Force and had a long, tenured career at first as an Airman, and later in life as a DoD Civilian Contracting Officer. I was born in January of 1973, and while my parents tried to make their marriage work over the next couple of years, it became clear

that they were headed in different directions.

When I was four, my mom met and married Leslie “Harvey” Cain. They enjoyed working on cars together, and for a short while, even owned an auto repair shop on the Southside of San Antonio. They enjoyed going to the race track, tending to their beautiful yard, trips to the coast, and eventually both ended up getting their CDL in order to drive 18-wheelers cross-country for Dallas-based FFE. My mother absolutely loved traveling cross-country, from sea to shining sea! To get paid for it was the cherry on top! Among her favorite cross-country sightings were Mount Rushmore, Niagara Falls, the giant sequoias of Yosemite National Park, the entire western seaboard, and the six majestic Rocky Mountain states of Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Utah, Colorado, and New Mexico. Cheryl and Harvey were active members of Hermann Sons Siemering Lodge #32 and enjoyed hanging out with friends at the Rathskeller, lodge bowling, Bingo and dancing in the ballroom. Among their favorite Lodge memories was serving annually at the tasty nacho and beer stand when every April, the Hermann Sons Grand Lodge, transformed its South St. Mary’s parking lot into Fiesta Family Fun Central; which always coincidentally fell on the week of my mom’s birthday! How nice of San Antonio to throw her a great big birthday party each year!

My mom flanked her commercial driving career with a long, tenured career as one of the best bookkeepers west of the Mississippi! Her boss, Jeff, at Otto Dukes once told me during a company barbecue, “Your Momma can find a penny in a sea of coins; she’s the best!” She managed the Accounts Receivable and Accounts Payable departments for Texas Public Radio, Holt Cat, and many large contracting companies throughout The Rio Grande Valley, Corpus Christi, Houston, and San Antonio. Her work ethic was absolutely second to none!

My Momma taught me from a very young age the value of a dollar, how to

work hard without complaining, that I only had to brush the teeth I wanted to keep, to be ready for the Sunday school van to pick me up by 7:00 a.m., lest I “keep the driver waiting”, that there’s no point in doing something if you’re not going to do it right the first time, to care for animals, to cook and know you can never add too much onion, garlic, or comino, to drop everything for a friend or family in need, care for the needs of my aging great-grandmother and grandmother, walk with my head held high, dress well from the thrift store, how to starch and iron for crisp collars and pleats, paint without leaving behind stroke marks, draw a palm tree, catch fireflies in a jar but make sure to release them before they die, write a letter, shine the wood floors until I saw my reflection, swim out to the 3rd, 4th, and 5th sandbars and not be scared if I got tired...”just float”, bait a hook, drive an 18-wheeler, balance a checkbook, be affectionate, mow and edge the lawn, prune the roses, pull weeds from the root, how to strip down a carburetor, change a spark plug, replace a fuse, thread a needle, sew on a button, hem a pair of pants, apply makeup, haggle in Reynosa, mount a horse, fire a gun, build a fire, pick cotton and okra, can peaches, fight for what I believe in, don’t take no for an answer, and so very much more...

The concept she drilled into me over and over again, was to take pride in my work, leave something better than how I found it, and that there’s a right way and a wrong way to everything — “If you’re not going to do it right the first time, don’t bother doing it at all!” By the time I was twelve, she had prepared me well for the perils of the world and to know how to pull myself up by the bootstraps!

My favorite memories with my mom were of warm-weather Saturday mornings. She’d get me up at the crack of dawn (she said it was “letting me sleep in”; trust me, it was not, LOL) and we’d work hard for 3-4 hours getting household chores done. Then, as a surprise for all our hard work she’d say, “Doodlebug, go grab us a knife and a cantaloupe, a couple of towels, and fill a

jug to the top with water. We're headed to the lake!" It was just her and me; windows hand-cranked down, cruising through the hill country, warm wind whipping through our hair...not a care in the world. We'd find a different lake, river, or stream each time to cast our tired feet and cares into. Jumping in together with reckless abandon, we'd splash, play, and come home late-evening burned to a crisp. Coming home, she'd cut off a few aloe vera leaves and salve our blistered shoulders and noses before we collapsed into the bed, intoxicated by our love for all things water; all things nature. Those were the best of times!

My Momma was an avid reader and frequent flyer of the Pan American Library near her home, on the Southside of San Antonio. Among her favorite reads were romance novels, books on birds, gardening, and home renovations. A life-long learner, and educator at heart, she'd pour into me so much of what she learned along the way. One of our favorite pastimes was sitting together on Sunday afternoon to go through our favorite parts of the latest Reader's Digest magazine. I would test her on the "Word Power" column and she never ceased to amaze me by getting nearly every definition right! I guess all those years of reading paid off! I loved it when she read, "Laughter, The Best Medicine", to me. That was by far my favorite!

Cheryll was also very creative; enjoying sewing, knitting, and even took up oil painting in her late 40's. Three of her exquisite paintings, along with my personal favorite, of the San Antonio Mission Concepción, hang on the walls of our home.

In the late 1980's, after acquiring a collection of Time Life Home Repair and Improvement books, my mom decided she was ready to partially renovate and update her 1950's-built home. She decided to initiate her efforts with rewiring of the entire home from the old Knob-and-Tube to the more modern copper,

sheathed wiring (you know, just something “simple”, to get started, LOL!). Before beginning, she got a bid from an electrician and decided, “That’s ridiculous! I’ll just do it myself.” I remember asking, “How are you going to do that? It sounds really complicated.” She said, “Oh, I’ll just go up to the library and check out some more books on electricity — I’ll figure it out.” So, next thing I knew there were probably 8 books on electricity sitting on the coffee table, along with her Time Life “Advanced Wiring” book, and it took her about 4 weeks to get through them all. She then said, “I think I’m ready”, and full steam ahead, she headed to the hardware store, and went for it! I’ll never forget when she had the city inspector come in after completing the work, he said, “Ma’am, who did your electrical work?” She replied, “Oh, I did it myself”. The inspector’s jaw about hit the floor as he gave her the good news that it passed with flying colors! Weeks later, her husband told her it was being talked about among the men at the local Whataburger, during the early morning coffee meet-up. I guess “BIG news travels fast in small circles”.

In 2004 and 2006, Cheryll’s granddaughters, Jordan and Taylor, were joyously welcomed into the world. They were the apple of Cheryll’s eye and brought her great joy as they energetically infused her life with laughter and fun. They, like her, enjoyed being in nature and all things water! We immensely enjoyed family trips to the beach and lake, cooling off together in our backyard swimming pool, barbecues, fishing, bird watching, hand-feeding deer and ducks, and hours upon hours of spirited card & board games. She taught her granddaughters one of her favorite games, Tripoly; one they still enjoy to this day. Jordan and Taylor were a huge help to their Grandma in the final years of her life. They often accompanied us to Comfort to help clean her room, organize her things, and help her with laundry. During hospitalizations they went out of their way to ensure her comfort by fluffing pillows, rubbing lotion on her back and legs, and climbing up in the bed with her to stroke her head or sing a few songs with her.

In the final decade of Cheryll's life, she enjoyed respite from her many years of hard work to tend to beautiful things: her beloved fur babies, oil painting, roses, hibiscus, begonias, geraniums, fruit trees, grape vines, sago palms, and her lush, beautiful lawn. In her mid-60's, as one not willing to hire out "unnecessary labor", it was not unusual to see her climbing a ladder to replace damaged shingles on her roof, changing the element out on her hot water heater, changing the spark plugs on her car, mowing her lawn, and pruning back her gorgeous garden. For several years after Harvey's passing in June of 2011, my mom tossed around the idea of leaving her Southside home to move up to Comfort, TX, to enjoy the peace and serenity of the Texas hill country. Perched high atop a verdant hill, with our help, my mom finally made the move in 2016 to the Hermann Sons Independent Living Retirement Home. She gained many devoted friends there that helped carry her both emotionally and physically through the next several years, as both her mind and body began to fail her. Among her favorite hill country-living activities were hand-feeding deer, volunteering at the annual chili cook-off, and driving the back roads of the Texas Hill Country on the hunt for the perfect "watering hole". Fiercely independent, the cognitive and physical losses my mom experienced as a result of the ravages of dementia and Myasthenia Gravis, ushered in a new, and unwelcome era of extremely difficult transition to a loss of independence. She said what she missed most was just being able to hop in her car and take off for the open road.

Cheryll leaves behind many who love her and have kept faithful watch and prayer over her through the years. She is survived by: her devoted daughter and son-in-love, Tracie Lynn & Saul Gonzalez, along with their daughters, Jordan Kimberlyn (15) & Taylor Grace (13) of San Antonio, TX; faithful friend and second mom to Tracie, Valerie Jean Johnson of San Antonio, TX; family in-love, Rogelio & Myrthala Gonzalez (Saul's parents) of Eagle Pass, TX and Philip & Myrthala Haack (Saul & Tracie's sister and brother-in-love) of Liberty Hill, TX; sister-in-love, Dorothy Biediger and Family (Harvey's sister) of

Garden Ridge, TX; adoring cousins, Patty & Larry Lyons of Sugarland, TX, and Dennis Melder & sons, Houston & Harrison, of Houston, TX; Goddaughter, Bridget Lyons & children Jayce (4) & Elyse (6 mos.) of Milwaukee, WI; long-time close family friend and life partner of beloved aunt, Alvaro Garcia of Houston, TX; and many thoughtful, long-time neighbors, dear friends that are like family, loyal co-workers, devoted caregivers, and compassionate medical professionals.

Cheryll is preceded in death by: Leslie "Harvey" Cain (husband), Tawana "Toni" Stillwell Bowden (mother), Thelma Mae Stillwell (grandmother), Houston Albert "H.A." Stillwell (grandfather), L.D. & Merle Stillwell (uncle & aunt), Alvie Lee "Jinks" Stillwell (uncle), Anna Mae & Stanley Pipkin (aunt & uncle), Janice Jacqueline "Jackie" Stillwell Melder (aunt), and her beloved fur babies: Ruffy, Buster Brown, Scooter, and Nacho

Cheryll would credit her merciful transition from here to eternity to the answered petitions of an army of Prayer Warriors, both near and far. The family would like to honor and thank you for your faithfulness and selflessness! May The Lord bless you 100-fold!

Momma, it is absolutely my honor to have been chosen to walk through this life as your daughter. The joy and peace I feel now that you are finally free from the confines of a body that failed you, far outweigh the grief I am experiencing as a result of my temporary loss. I will miss you and very much look forward to the moment when, in the blink of an eye, we will be reunited, in perfect love, for all eternity.

You are precious to me, and I love you, Dorda! 🦋

I'll fly away, oh, Glory

I'll fly away

When I die, Hallelujah, by and by

I'll fly away...

Viewing and Funeral Services will be held privately due to health and safety concerns surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic. Cheryll will be laid to rest at Mission Burial Park South, 1700 S.E. Military Drive, San Antonio, TX, 78214, in The Chapel Gardens. In lieu of flowers, the family asks that you prayerfully consider a donation in the family's name to Community Bible Church, 2477 N Loop 1604 E, San Antonio, TX 78232 or online @ cbc.global and please leave a favorite memory, and a photo if you have it, here on Cheryll's Memorial Wall. The family would also like to encourage you to take a leisurely drive through the scenic hill country and find a nice, refreshing "watering hole" to jump into, relax, and spend the day with those you love. Take along a cantaloupe, a jug of water, and the fond memories you carry with you of our Beloved Cheryll. Spend a moment in reflection of her life and what she meant to you. Praise our God from Whom all blessings flow! EnJOY Life! It's one of the best ways to honor Cheryll until we are all reunited in a celestial land where joy shall never end.

The thief comes only in order to steal and kill and destroy. Jesus said, "I came that they may have and enjoy life; in abundance, to the full, until it overflows."  
— John 10:10 (AMP)

# Cemetery Details

## **Mission Burial Park South**

1700 SE Military Dr.  
San Antonio, TX 78214  
<http://www.missionparks.com>

# Tribute Wall




“ *Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Cheryll Lynette Stillwell Cain.*



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July 27, 2020 at 04:34 PM



“ *Will always remember the things Cheryll loved fiercely - Her Lord, her family, her friends, her furry babies, and the great out of doors. So so glad we were friends and shared our children and grandchildren. Will miss you at all our family gatherings but will see you again in the twinkling of an eye. I love you and will miss you dearly ....* 

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**Valerie Johnson** - July 27, 2020 at 01:20 AM



“ *Tracie's Mom & Dad*



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**Saul Tracie** - July 26, 2020 at 08:34 PM



“ Lord knows how grateful I am for my aunt Cheryll and uncle Harvey, I will miss her dearly I’ve had my crying spells, I’m so happy to have had her in my life, because of them two pushing my mind to adore mechanics I now am a lead diesel tech for one of the largest corporations in the world... she bought me my first tool box... sill have it today... she helped me excel in electrical work when they remodeled there home.. I’ve also realized how important family is because of them as well.. I’d say they played an important roll in who I have become today! I will miss you aunt Cheryll and I know your always looking over all of us!! Love you always, I pray for every one that’s been involved in our whole family’s sorrow and loss together we are not alone. Love each and every one of you.

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**Chad Cain** - July 26, 2020 at 08:10 PM



“ 💕5 Generations💕



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**Saul Tracie** - July 26, 2020 at 06:51 PM



“ *My precious Momma ~ the early years*



Saul Tracie - July 26, 2020 at 06:31 PM



“ *I love you, Dorda* 🥰



Saul Tracie - July 26, 2020 at 06:18 PM



“ *1 file added to the tribute wall*



Jordan Gonzalez - July 26, 2020 at 01:08 AM



*Jordan, thank you for making this sweet video for your Grandma. She loves you so much!* 🥰🥰

Saul Tracie - July 26, 2020 at 06:19 PM

TG

“ One of her favorite things to do with us was go to the lake and swim. I remember going to Boerne Lake all together and we enjoyed the great outdoors, swam, ate, and enjoyed each other’s company. She loved being outside and seeing all the different animal life! My favorite memory with her is going to Lake LBJ and staying in a rental home. We rented a boat and had so much fun that day. She was so funny in the water on a raft when she would lay her head back and flip upside down in the water. We all had so much fun there!

*My mom told me all about what she was like in her young adult life. Not only was she an amazing cook, but she made sure everything done by her was completed right the first time. One Easter, I was sweeping our driveway and she was walking around me with her cigarette telling me to do everything right the very first time, because there was no point in doing something if it’s not going to be done right! I asked her about smoking, and if it tasted good. Lol. She told me if I ever had to take a smoke, only do it once. Because once you’re hooked, you’re hooked! She was always so funny when I had small talks with her.*

*By knowing my grandma, I knew she was not going to give up on anything without a fight! She was such a strong woman and fought for what she believed in. She gave Dementia and Myasthenia Gravis a run for their money. When COVID hit her, she fought hard, but God took her into His kingdom to live with Him for eternity. Though I am sad she is no longer a part of this earth spiritually, it gives me comfort to know that she is no longer suffering, and is celebrating with Jesus in Heaven.*

*Luke 23:43*

*And he said to him, “Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise.”*

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**Taylor Gonzalez** - July 26, 2020 at 01:08 AM



*Grandma Cheryll loves you so much, Tink! Thank you for this beautiful memoir 🐾*

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**Saul Tracie** - July 26, 2020 at 06:22 PM



*Will always remember the things Cheryll loved fiercely - Her Lord, her family, her friends, her furry babies, and the great out of doors. So so glad we were friends and shared our children and grandchildren. Will miss you at all our family gatherings but will see you again in the twinkling of an eye. I love you and will miss you dearly...❤️*

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**Valerie Johnson** - July 27, 2020 at 01:03 AM