



Mary S. Hernandez

September 20, 1935 - May 3, 2022

Our Mom's Story

Mary Hernandez was born Maria de Jesus Salas on September 20, 1935 to a farmer, Apolonio Salas and a home maker, Lena Benavides Salas. She was the middle child of three with older brother Natividad Salas and younger brother, Henry Salas. The family would move to San Antonio where Mary attended schools in the South San Independent School District, graduating from South San High School. Mary would spend her youth helping out her dad who, by now owned a neighborhood grocery store, Salas Grocery on the southeast corner of Southcross and Zarzamora. Some of her summers were spent working at the San Antonio Zoo where amongst her many responsibilities was learning how to spin cotton candy, a skill she would use later in life. She also worked at the Olmos Pharmacy on McCullough Avenue. When not working, Mary loved to go dancing with her friends and explore the stores in and around downtown San Antonio. In time, a young man came courting and love would foster a marriage proposal and Mary Salas would become Mary S. Hernandez, wife to Miguel S. Hernandez. Their family grew first with Michael (1968), then Leonard (1971) 3 years later, followed 4 years later by Lisa Marie (1975).

Growing up watching mama as a wife meant seeing her devotion to our father. She was up every morning preparing his breakfast and a lunch to take to

work. We don't remember a day we weren't woken up with the wonderful smells emanating from our kitchen. As our mom, we were sent to school with a "kiss and a hug from mama." Come to think of it, we were sent away everywhere with a "kiss and a hug from mama."

Mom was well known at all the schools we attended. From Columbia Heights Elementary to Leal Middle School to Harlandale High School, her involvement in PTA, all volunteer opportunities, band chaperone, etc. made her legendary with the faculties and staffs. The number of PTA Life Membership recognitions is staggering both at the local and state level. Framed recognitions from the band programs adorned our home walls. Things got done when mom was involved. Even after we graduated from high school, mom still found ways to volunteer at the schools. Those in charge knew she was only a phone call away. For a time, her devotion to volunteering at Columbia Heights Elementary transitioned into being hired as a lunch room monitor. Dedicated, she never missed a day unless under an uncontrollable situation.

In addition to being known as a devoted volunteer, mom was also known as the "cotton candy" lady. The first time Columbia Heights hosted an evening school carnival, she offered to spin cotton candy to raise funds, all the school needed to do was rent the machine and purchase the needed sugar crystals. On a whim, the school decided "why not?! Let's give it a shot." The cotton candy line was long and successful. From that point on, our mom relished at the opportunity to spin her cotton candy which she did a lot. While the cotton candy made many kids happy, I don't think they were ever as happy as our mom who loved putting that smile on her customers' faces.

Always a very giving person, mom would take it upon herself from time to time to provide breakfast tacos to the Columbia Heights faculty and staff. She would get up at 4a to start cooking. She had two tacos for every teacher and staff member by 6:45a, each pair lovingly wrapped in their own foil bundle.

Seeing her give at that level helped us develop a strong sense of duty, commitment, and care. She knew extra and she went extra and we loved her for it. For mom, giving extra meant love.

Jewelry was one of her must-haves. Rarely was there a day she wasn't adorned with pretty ear rings, bracelets, necklaces, or pins. This made gift giving easier as gifting her jewelry would light her up. Of course, she would buy herself a steady amount of "bling" when something caught her eye. She loved her sparkle and why shouldn't she. Everything she wore looked great on her and she looked beautiful wearing it.

Mom loved her pets, whether it was her chihuahua, Peanut, (our earliest memory) or the steady array of cats, dogs, hermit crabs, turtles, or fish. Those who know "Fishy-Fishy" are smiling right now at the memory. A kind soul, she cared and loved every pet who crossed her path.

And then there was the dancing. Her love of shaking her booty didn't end when she and her friends stopped attending dance clubs in their youth. You'd see mom dancing at every opportunity, even if she thought no one was watching. Heck, especially if she knew people were watching. It didn't hinder her need to dance. Her adorable prancing and shuffling to the beat brightened our day, even if we didn't realize it needed brightening. Everyone who shared in her dance glow was gifted with happiness. Whatever weight of despair or stress didn't seem quite as heavy when mom danced. She loved her mariachi music, loved her 50's hits, would get excited when "September" from Earth, Wind, & Fire would play on the radio, and look forward to shows like Sabado Gigante who would feature latin singing artists like Thalía, Jenni Rivera, and Celia Cruz, some of her favorites.

Our mom's close circle of friends would find themselves talking for long

lengths of time on bus trips to the Couchatta Casino, or bingo night at various local places, hosting bunco time, visiting with her Guadalupeans friends, or simply on the phone. Our mom's limitless love of her friends guaranteed she was ready to offer any form of assistance or help.

When it came to cooking, our mom excelled at every dish she prepared. While many memories flow of her culinary skills, a few stick out. Mom's Mexican rice was legendary and we couldn't wait for any occasion which called for her to make her rice. For year's, we would watch her make it, write down the recipe, and without fail, we just could never get it right. Looking back, her secret to her rice was the love she put in to it. How can something as important as a mother's love be captured on paper? Another treat were her buñuelos. Oh how our kitchen smelled wonderfully sweet and decadent when mom would make her buñuelos. The dozens upon dozens of those light, puffed pastries adorned with cinnamon sugar would always find themselves as gifts for others. She had an incredible au-gratin potato recipe and let's not forget one of her signature delicacies, her salsa. Wow!

As all great love stories go, our mom's love story needed a final chapter. For her, it began in 2022. Where once we could only imagine what we would be going through when this type of closure was upon us, it became apparent that our mom's condition still offered a gift, because that is who she has always been and who she will always be. In her final days with us, she offered us the opportunity to be introspective. What we have remembered is that we were brought up in an eternally loving home. Mom's love for us was also found in our belief in ourselves, in knowing the importance of kissing a loved one, in the tucking in of our kids, in caressing our pets, in feeling grateful for what we have, in taking care of our health, our relationships, and realizing the joy in the world.

Mom in heaven, we will forever carry with us your kiss and hug from mama.

We love you.

- Michael, Leonard, & Lisa

A Playlist for our Mom:

<https://music.apple.com/us/playlist/mary-s-hernandez/pl.u-d2b00DLT3erJk>

Cemetery Details

San Fernando Cemetery #2

746 Castroville Rd.
San Antonio, TX 78237

Previous Events

Visitation

MAY 11. 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Palm Heights Mortuary
3711 S Zarzamora St
San Antonio, TX 78225
(210) 924-4568
<https://www.missionparks.com/>

Departure

MAY 12. 10:00 AM (CT)

Palm Heights Mortuary
3711 S Zarzamora St
San Antonio, TX 78225
(210) 924-4568
<https://www.missionparks.com/>

Mass

MAY 12. 10:30 AM (CT)

St. Joseph (So. San) Catholic Church
535 New Laredo Hwy
San Antonio, TX 78211

Tribute Wall



“ *My condolences to Lisa, Leonard and Michael, I'm sorry for your loss. May her sweet warmhearted caring love always watch over all of you.* ”

Leonardo Arriaga - July 08, 2023 at 02:46 PM



“ *Basket of Memories was purchased for the family of Mary S. Hernandez.* ”



May 11, 2022 at 02:18 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Mary S. Hernandez.* ”



May 11, 2022 at 11:45 AM

YA

“ □ *Our sincere condolences for your loss. A memory I'd like to share is Mary winning at our snowball game during our annual Ladies Christmas Party 2021. We had a wonderful time with her and she had so much energy to win the snowball game (and she won fair and square / we didn't let her win). I'm thankful that we have such a fun and beautiful memory with her. We stayed up till about 2 AM that night chatting and laughing with her. We kept asking if she was tired but she would say no she was having a good time.*



Yvonne Aguilar - May 11, 2022 at 08:01 AM



“ *Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Mary S. Hernandez.*



May 10, 2022 at 10:13 PM



“ *Crystal Cross Bouquet was purchased for the family of Mary S. Hernandez.*



May 10, 2022 at 05:39 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Mary S. Hernandez.*



May 10, 2022 at 04:14 PM