



Virginia Rives Tranbarger nee Black

August 13, 1936 - September 16, 2023

After a long illness, Virginia Rives Tranbarger, nee Black, passed away peacefully on Sept. 16, 2023. She was 87 years old.

“So many books, so little time” read one of her prized book bags, and this motto epitomized Virginia’s greatest passion and urgency in life. She loved to read – often devouring three or more books a week – and frequently declared, “Books are my friends.”

But throughout her life, Virginia had many friends – the human kind – that she made through her church, various choirs, and work. She was friendly and easy to talk to.

Born on Aug. 13, 1936 – “Friday the Thirteenth,” she would often joke – she was the youngest child of Linda Frances and George Shornden Black Sr. of Ponca City, OK. Virginia graduated in 1954 from Ponca City High School and went on to receive her BS from Phillips University in Enid, OK.

Her training was as an elementary schoolteacher, and her positions took her to Kansas and New Mexico. While teaching in Roswell, NM, mutual friends introduced Virginia to Oren Tranbarger, who also was from Ponca City. After a blind date and long-distance courtship, they married in 1961 and soon started a family.

Virginia did not work outside the home when their three children were young but was an active volunteer for the Brownies and a Den Mother for Cub Scouts. She led a church youth group and sang in the church choir. The highlight of her year was to rehearse and perform Handel's Messiah. Virginia returned to teaching when her youngest child reached nursery school. After she and Oren divorced, Virginia specialized as a remedial reading teacher, working primarily with migrant students in San Antonio's Edgewood Independent School District. This was a very rewarding yet challenging job for Virginia.

In her spare time, she sang with the church choir and performed with the Mission Belles women's barbershop chorus and experimented with recipes from her vast cookbook collection.

Hoping to expand her horizons and explore her other passion of writing, Virginia took journalism classes at San Antonio College. After moving to Colorado in 1983, she began freelance-writing for the local community paper in the Fort Collins-Greeley-Loveland area. She also worked in property management and as a caretaker for patients with dementia.

Although she loved living near the Rocky Mountains, she returned to Texas in 1995 to be closer to her sons and their families. She discovered her ideal profession as a proofreader for court reporters in Corpus Christi and San Antonio, and she enjoyed that work until she retired around 2010.

Wherever she lived, Virginia always had a pile of books next to her bed and her seat on the sofa. Her favorite genres were historical fiction, biography, and cookbooks.

Virginia is preceded in death by her parents, brother George S. Black Jr. and sister Elizabeth.

She is survived by her children Alison Epstein of Ashkelon, Israel; Russell

Nelson Tranbarger of Corpus Christi; and Patrick Nathan Tranbarger of San Antonio; and by her grandchildren Alyssa Tranbarger, Zoe Epstein, Maayan Ben Admon, Preston Tranbarger, Ivy Tranbarger, Christian Tranbarger, Angela Mallia, James Mallia, and David Zvi Kalman; and by nine great-grandchildren.

Virginia had always hoped to return to Ponca City, and her remains will be buried alongside her parents in the Odd Fellows Cemetery there.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to a local library or to the Alzheimer's Association.

Tribute Wall

MN

“ *Mission Park North lit a candle in memory of Virginia Rives Tranbarger nee Black*



Mission Park North - September 30, 2023 at 01:04 PM