



Yvonne Mann Davidson

April 25, 1924 - March 5, 2018

Yvonne Mann Davidson, née Ingeborg Margarete Lenkowitz? , peacefully passed away Monday, March 5, 2018, very close to her 94th birthday. She is survived by her loving daughter, Lindy Kahn (Sanford) and her loving son, Larry Mann, step-daughter Juliette (Freddi) Ulli and step-son, Michael Gottsegean and of blessed memory, Moira Gottsegean. She leaves behind eight grandchildren: Lauren Kahn, Alysha Kahn Frieden (Blake), Oren Davidson, Priya, Jonathan and Norman Ulli, Tyler and Cody Gottsegean and four great-grandchildren, Evan, Jonah and Alex Frieden and Mikayla Kahn, as well as numerous nieces and nephews whom she loved like her own children.

Yvonne was preceded in death by her first husband, Paul Mann, her second husband, Leo Davidson, her parents, Simon and Gertrude Lenkway and her brothers, Kurt Lenkway, and his wife Rita and John Lenkway and his wife, Ruth.

Yvonne was born in Düsseldorf, Germany on April 25, 1924. She came from a large family, her father being one of nine siblings. Her father owned an upscale furniture store in Cologne. As Hitler and the Nazis began to take over schools, force businesses to close and place more restrictions on Jews, he knew it was time to go. He devised an elaborate escape plan for his immediate family involving a kayak, hollowing out sections of the family car and sending secret shipments of furniture and valuables out of the country. At

age 14, two months before Kristalnacht, in Sept. 1938, Yvonne, her two brothers and her parents fled her birthplace and embarked on an odyssey, risking their lives to get to safe haven. They traveled through Holland, Switzerland and Italy, eventually settling in the south of France for three years. ?And that is when Inge changed her name to Yvonne. ? There the ? family? made a life for themselves attempting to survive the war with other refugees living ?in Nice. ?

In 1941 the family petitioned the American Embassy in Lisbon to issue visas to them so they could emigrate to the U.S. When they arrived ?at Ellis Island Yvonne's father Americanized their last name and changed it to Lenkway; ? they settled in Brooklyn. All the members of the family with the exception of Gertrude went to work at whatever menial jobs they could find. Yvonne worked as a nanny and in a sewing factory.

In the summer of 1945 Yvonne met Paul, a handsome and charming Viennese pianist and songwriter, 13 years her senior, who was performing at a hotel in the Catskills in upstate NY. After a two year courtship they married in 1947. They made the big move out to a new sparsely populated area in Queens. There they raised their family and it became the epicenter of their life together. Much of it was punctuated by house parties, poker games and backyard BBQ's. And music was always at the core. Yvonne supported her husband's endeavors by touring with him in Europe and promoting his record albums. They spent several summers at a hotel in the Catskills where Paul entertained guests with his music and Yvonne often accompanied him as the lead singer. Paul's job as a pianist at restaurants and clubs required that he work at night, so Yvonne attended many events alone and as a result, she developed multiple groups of friends; bridge, her French club, Hadassah, her childhood friends from Germany and tennis buddies. Yvonne was a frequent volunteer at her children's schools, serving on the PTA and she also became involved with Girl Scouts, acting as a troop leader. Later on when her children

were in high school she took on part time jobs to fulfill her sense of independence. Paul and Yvonne were happily married for 36 years.

After Paul died in 1983, Yvonne was fortunate to find love and companionship again with Leo Davidson, a Dutchman and widower she was introduced to whom recently had lost his wife. She embraced his dog, a Golden retriever, named Peter (Leo said it was a package deal), as well as his family of two daughters and accompanying grandchildren as her own. Their 13 year marriage brought them much joy and happiness. They started a new life together acquiring a home in Florida, participating in tennis and bridge tournaments, traveling to Europe and Israel together and developing a social life filled with friends and fun.

In 1997 after Leo's death she found herself alone again. That didn't stop her from traveling extensively to see her children and grandchildren, going to movies, out to dinners, or attending special events. Truly, family was Yvonne's passion and she cherished every moment of family togetherness. She loved people and people loved her. Her friends spanned many generations. She had a way of connecting with people to make each person she met feel unique and appreciated.

Yvonne's devotion to family was her most significant achievement. She never stopped trying to convey her values and beliefs to her children and grandchildren. She was affectionately known as "Omi."

Yvonne was outgoing and non-judgmental, always willing to invite friends and relatives to her table whenever they showed up. Everyone knew they could always get a good meal and an earful of stories at Omi's house.

She loved animals, her card games, swimming, tennis, music, dancing,

cooking and entertaining family and friends. Although she never completed a formal education, she was a self-taught woman and became an avid reader. She tackled computers, iPhones and became adept at sending emails.

She was strong willed and determined serving as an example of how fiercely independent someone can be at an advanced age. Maintaining that sense of freedom and independence was paramount to Yvonne. She successfully managed two houses in New York and Florida and went back and forth as a "snowbird" taking refuge from the cold for over 35 years even after her second husband passed away. She drove a car until 93 and played tennis until 85.

Houston became her last home but for only a brief three months.

The family wishes to give personal thanks to Bethony Parfait, Gloria Mathis, Gazale Harris, Ada Mae Farlough and Evelyn Jean Okwor, all of whom cared for Yvonne in her final months with the deepest of devotion.

Yvonne touched many lives with her warmth, wisdom and humor. She was a loving, dedicated daughter, sister, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. She will always be remembered as the epitome of graciousness, kindness and generosity. Yvonne lived a long and fulfilling life and is irreplaceable; we love her and will miss her.

Contributions in Yvonne's memory may be made to Hadassah, Holocaust Museum Houston or a charity of your choice.

Tribute Wall

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“ To my dear dear Mann family [Larry and Lindy],
I do have a heart broken feeling but she have a very long wonderful
life with her large family, admired her with my mother and my father
for 60 years. One thing I do know and learned from our generation
in one direction not left nor right, we all going foward.
I'm always there for you both and I'm sure you both will do the same
for me and my sister.
I did it from my heart.
I love you both.
Loving old friends,
Ralphie and Genie

RALPH E WIZNITZER - April 19, 2018 at 11:49 PM