



Elizabeth Thompson Benka

May 7, 1940 - February 24, 2021

Born May 7, 1940 in Newport News, Virginia, Elizabeth Joan Thompson Benka of Prince George, Virginia passed peacefully on February 24, 2021 in Mesa, Arizona. Predeceased by husband, Daniel L. Benka, father, William Wright Thompson and mother, Nellie Matthews Thompson, Elizabeth lived a full life with family and friends. Service to all was the focus of her time and source of happiness. As the daughter of a military officer, Elizabeth grew up a child of the world. Living throughout the United States, Europe and Asia, her experiences instilled in her a curiosity for all that life had to offer and the ability to instantly connect with and develop lifelong friendships with people from all walks of life. Her gregarious and positive nature was infectious to all she met and served as constant inspiration for those who knew her well. Elizabeth graduated from her beloved Punahou in Honolulu, Hawaii in 1958 in which she was active in the alumni association and regularly attended reunions with her family. After attending Radford University, Elizabeth married and became a military wife for 26 years moving back overseas to France, Korea, and across the United States. Elizabeth was proud to have been selected as a Military Wife of the Year finalist in 1974. In the early 1970's, Elizabeth became an active member of the United States Jaycees. She became a charter member of the US Jaycee Women, President of the Virginia Jaycee Women, and eventually National Vice President of the Jaycee Women. She was honored with the titles US Congresswoman, US Jaycee Ambassador and a JCI Senatorship. She was elected President of the Virginia JCI Senate and as US JCI Senate National Vice President. Elizabeth was currently serving as the Region III Foundation Representative. She also spent considerable time engaged with the Bellwood Women's Club for which she served as President, Women of the Moose, area Republican Women's Club and various other organizations always with a focus on "Giving Back". Elizabeth embraced, mentored and supported many women seeking leadership roles throughout her life. Elizabeth's amazing memory, intellect and keen wit will be missed by the many people whose lives she has touched. Her storytelling was spectacular and she could make anyone with whom she came in contact, smile. Elizabeth is survived by her son Matthew D. Benka, daughter Joanna K. Tucker, their respective spouses, Amy Warner Benka and Duane A. Tucker, and her three grandchildren, Kyla Tucker, Canyon Tucker, and Matthew Benka. A graveside service will be held on Friday, March 19, 2021 at

1:00 pm at Southlawn Memorial Park. Condolences can be registered at www.jtmorriss.com.

Cemetery

Southlawn Memorial Park
1911 Birdsong Road
Petersburg, VA, 23805

Events

MAR
19

Graveside

01:00PM

Southlawn Memorial Park
1911 Birdsong Road, Petersburg, VA, US, 23805

Comments



“ My deepest condolences to the Benka Family. I always looked forward seeing Elizabeth at the Legion or Moose to hear about her trips especially about Billy Ray Cyrus. She was a delight to be around, work with and converse. She will be truly missed. Brenda Livingston



Brenda Livingston - March 16 at 12:04 PM



“ Sincere condolences to the Benka family.



Sue Breeding - March 13 at 08:26 PM



“ I only lived in Virginia for around four years but Elizabeth and Dan made sure I was welcomed into the Virginia JCI Senate when I arrived and I have many fond memories of Senate events. Elizabeth and Dan were always very involved but they always made time to welcome folks, particularly new members. They will be sorely missed by many people but their impact on the Senate and on individuals they knew will last forever. They have lived respected and died regretted.

Ian Nelson
Senator 45643
Past Chair of the British Senate

Ian Nelson - March 11 at 10:57 AM



“ Kathleen Bryant Vincent lit a candle in memory of Elizabeth Thompson Benka



Kathleen Bryant Vincent - March 07 at 03:06 PM



“ I was remiss in not Writing this for Dan so I will share memories of both Dan and Elizabeth. Dan and Elizabeth were some of the first people we met in the Jaycees when my wife and i moved to Virginia in the Late 70's. we formed a nice friendship even tho we were from different Chapters. That friendship continued after we moved to New Jersey. Dan and Elizabeth were special people. We did not see them much until we started going to different USJCI Senate functions. We always looked forward to seeing Dan and Elizabeth and catching up on conversations. My service in the Air Force was during the same time as Dan's in the 60's and Elizabeth would mention that her father served in the Air Force and when items came up for bid in the many Senate Foundation auctions that were Air Force related we always enjoyed a healthy competitive spirit.

That great circle of friendship has severed 2 more links, and as that circle gets smaller we will all remember those that are missing and if everything plays out, we will all meet again and continue the great friendships we enjoyed.

You are in our thoughts

Jim Miller #34554 and Jackie Miller #56981

Both Life members of the Virginia Jaycees

Jim Miller - March 06 at 03:01 PM



“ 3 files added to the tribute wall



Kim & Beverly Newlin - March 04 at 11:31 PM



“ Elizabeth and I became friends while serving as State Presidents together and went on to serve as National Vice Presidents together and shared responsibilities at our MAI Meeting, we than went on to serve as Region II and III JCI Senate Foundation Representatives and set the bar on fundraising. She was a special lady, and I loved her for her compassion, kindness and friendship. She was the spark plug on setting up our NVP reunions at each National Meeting. She and Dan will be missed by her Senate family.

Prayers to her family.

Roxanne Astry #57298



ROXANNE ASTRY - March 04 at 08:05 PM



“ Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Elizabeth Thompson Benka.



March 04 at 07:29 PM



“ 31 files added to the tribute wall



Kim & Beverly Newlin - March 04 at 05:10 PM



“ Condolences to the Elizabeth & Dan Benk's Family. We had been friends with since early 1970s while at Ft Lee & Petersburg/VA Jaycess.

Kim & Beverly Newlin - March 04 at 05:02 PM



“ A dear sweet person who was dedicated to helping others...may she rest in peace and be remembered for her kindness.

Bernie Kirsch - March 04 at 03:55 PM



“ Beverly Draper lit a candle in memory of Elizabeth Thompson Benka



Beverly Draper - March 04 at 01:45 PM



“ I met Elizabeth through the Women of the Moose. May she rest in peace. So sorry for your loss.

Beverly Draper - March 04 at 01:50 PM



“ So sad to hear of Elizabeth's passing. She was a bright spot in all of our Lions events. She and Dan are together now! RIP Elizabeth

Kay Almarode - March 04 at 10:49 AM



“ There will not be a day that goes by that I will not remember Elizabeth and Dan . They gave us a beautiful sailboat when my husband was National President of the Senate and that gift holds a prominent place on our fireplace. Her smile was infectious! She will be so missed!

diane.baerveldt - March 04 at 08:51 AM