



Laura Lavan (Leavell) Lee

August 13, 1941 - May 16, 2024

Laura Lavan (Leavell) Lee was 82 born on August 13, 1941, in Edinburg, Texas, and the youngest daughter to Elisa Lopez and Hardie Duncan Leavell. Lavan was 89 days shy of turning 83.

Lavan passed away peacefully in the Hospice of East Texas Palliative Care on Thursday, May 16, 2024 at 10:05 AM.

Lavan and Gary knew of each other since 5th grade then at 16 they went on a date with Lavan's older brother Devan and his girlfriend. Devan was also Gary's friend prior to meeting Lavan. Lavan married her high school sweetheart Gary Keith Lee, Sr. on August 16, 1959, in Harlingen. The Love Birds were married and built a life and family together for 64.9 years. It's exactly three months shy of Lavan celebrating another milestone anniversary of 65 years of marriage with her soulmate Gary. Lavan and Gary were not only husband, wife, and soulmates but, each other's best friends throughout their entire marriage.

Lavan worked at Walmart Store #1044 on Troup Hwy in Tyler as the Layaway Manager for 27 years and retired on March 3, 2016. Previous employer was with TG&Y in Tyler as an Office Manager for 10 years until the store was permanently closed.

The visitation will be at 1:30 p.m., one hour prior to the service. The services

will be held at 2:30 p.m. at Stewart Funeral Home in Tyler followed by graveside services at Cathedral in the Pines in Tyler, Texas officiated by Reverend Richard Luna of Tyler.

Lavan was preceded in death by her father, Hardie Duncan Leavell on December 11, 1949, mother, Elisa Lopez Leavell on December 27, 1977, father-in-law, Orlin Hascue Lee on December 29, 1958, mother-in-law, Buena Lorraine Crump of Tyler on September 8, 2018, great-granddaughter, Leighton James Rutledge of Amarillo on August 17, 2019, and grandson, Tristan Lane Lee of Axtell on April 10, 2024, and 12 siblings: brother, John Aubrey Leavelle on April 22, 1997, brother, Wilburn Alton Leavelle on January 20, 2000, brother, Travis Godley Leavelle on July 22, 1998, sister, Mary Velma Leavelle Wallace on November 27, 1978, brother, Elvin "Buddy" Rufus Leavelle in 2007 - twin to sister, Evalyn Ruth Leavelle Lindbeck Garvin on July 6, 1997, sister, Evan Elisa Leavell in 1940 (1-year-old) twin to brother, Hardie Devan Leavell of Timpson on December 6, 2013, sister, Ramona Balderas of Harlingen on April 3, 2000, brother, Filiberto "Gilbert" Lucero of Raymondville on September 26, 2006, brother, Julian "John" Gilbert of Lamesa on May 6, 2014, and sister, Estella "Stella" Leavell Ash of Walla Walla, Washington May 6, 2010.

Survivors include 4 children: daughter, Laury Lorraine Lee (Russel) Johnson of Tyler, son, Gary Keith Lee, Jr. of Longview, daughter, Deanna "Dede" Lee of Axtell and Barry Kevin (Connie) Lee of Dennison; 10 grandchildren: Amber Michelle (Jake) Lee of Waco, Landon Drew (Kayla) Johnson of Midland, Presley Denyse Johnson of Plano, Chase Ariel (Haley) Lee of Longview, Kristian Elisa Lee of Bullard, Zachary Lee Rutledge, Gary Michael Rutledge, Jr., Jesse Aaron (Lauren) Rutledge and Aidan Nathaniel Lee all of Axtell; 15 great-grandchildren: Hailey McKenzie (Josh) Berry of Oaklawn, Macey Grace Johnson and Kinsey Elise Johnson both of Midland, Candace Ariel Lee, Carson Wade Lee and Saydee Brooke Lee all of Longview, Autumn Rose Lee

and Luke Reaves both of Bullard, Jay Rutledge, Drezden Drake Rutledge, Faith Ann Rutledge, Paislee Danielle Rutledge, Parker Leight Rutledge and Jett Aaron Rutledge all of Axtell; only surviving sibling is her little brother, Lloyd Bentson (Donna) Leavell of Bacliff, Texas; longtime Special and Dearest Friend, Melanie Medford of Henderson. Lavan had numerous nieces and nephews.

The pallbearers are MeeMee's 6 Grandsons: Landon Johnson of Midland, Chase Lee of Longview, Zachary, Gary, Jesse Rutledge and Aidan Lee all of Axtell. Honorary Pallbearers are her two sons: Keith Lee of Longview and Kevin Lee of Denison.

Lavan's natural beauty was enhanced by her beauty with a touch of eyebrow pencil and a pop of color with her signature orange or red lipstick. She found comfort in reading romance novels and spent her mornings engaging in crossword puzzles with her beloved husband, creating a sense of joy and contentment that filled their lives. Her love for the Dallas Cowboys was unwavering for 64 years, as well as the Texas Rangers and George Strait's music brought her endless joy. She loved watching Family Feud and Wheel of Fortune every day at 6:30 p.m. but, watching old westerns alongside her soulmate brought her immense happiness. The vibrant energy of the color of orange was her favorite color. Lavan's love story with her husband affectionately embraced each other as Gorgeous and Handsome. These names became their signature closing in their greeting cards, symbolizing the love filled in their hearts. Lavan loved, cherished and lived for her family and she is known by all of her grandchildren as MeeMee. Lavan's devotion to her family was a shining example of her unconditional love, and she reminded her husband repeatedly to take care of her precious children. Her absence from this earth will sorely be missed but, her legacy will live on.

The Lee family wishes to express their sincere gratitude for Lavan's caregivers at Hospice of East Texas Palliative Care who helped make our family's beloved Matriarch as comfortable and pain-free as possible during her last week on earth.

If, desired memorials may be made in Lavan Lee's name to Hospice of East Texas Palliative Care, 4111 University Blvd, Tyler, Texas 75701, (903) 266-3400, www.hospiceofeasttexas.org or The Michael J Fox Parkinson's Research, Grand Central Station, PO Box 4777, New York, NY 10163-4777, (212) 509-1524 or contact info@michaeljfox.org.

Cemetery Details

Cathedral in the Pines Cemetery

7825 South Broadway Avenue
Tyler, TX 75703

Previous Events

Visitation

MAY 23. 1:30 PM - 2:30 PM (CT)

Stewart Family Funeral Home
7525 Old Jacksonville Hwy
Tyler, TX 75703
(903) 581-2008

Service

MAY 23. 2:30 PM (CT)

Stewart Family Funeral Home
7525 Old Jacksonville Hwy
Tyler, TX 75703
(903) 581-2008

Tribute Wall



“ Stewart Family Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Laura Lavan (Leavell) Lee



Stewart Family Funeral Home - May 22, 2024 at 04:38 PM



“ 1 file added to the album Life Tributes



Stewart Family Funeral Home - May 22, 2024 at 04:57 PM



“ 79 files added to the album Life Tributes



Stewart Family Funeral Home - May 22, 2024 at 12:34 PM

DM

“ Your mom and dad were a big part of our young social life. Playing cards and having wonderful family time. Thank you for including us for the many milestones in your family. Prayers and God's comfort to the whole family.

Donna Mendez - May 20, 2024 at 09:39 PM

BB

“ Lavan you were so much a part of growing up, sleepovers, dinners, and being my carpool Mom. Thank you and prayers to your family.
Becky Bryant

Becky Bryant - May 20, 2024 at 03:25 PM