



## Willadene Reitz

August 23, 1929 - April 8, 2021

Willadene Reitz (aka Willa, Willie, Mom, Gramma, GrayMo, Gigi) passed away peacefully on April 8, 2021, at her home in Visalia. She was 91 years old and didn't look a day over 75! She was born to Cy and Zora Stearns on August 23, 1929, in Sioux City, Iowa. The family moved to Visalia when Willie was 9 years old and she began attending the 4th grade at Washington School. She graduated from Visalia Union High School in 1947 and then from College of the Sequoias 2 years later. Willadene loved writing and had dreams of being an investigative journalist for the Los Angeles Times. To gain experience for her future career, she began working at the Visalia Times-Delta at age 15 as a proof reader and eventually worked her way up to the position of Society Editor. Willie's career plans took a backseat to building a family when she met and married Kenneth Reitz of Exeter. They married in 1950, and raised two children Valletta and Bryan. Together, Willie and Ken owned and operated a successful underground pipeline construction company for 18 years. Kenny was the first to admit that he couldn't have done it without her. Wille later worked for Family Planning Program in Visalia for 14 years, retiring as Director of Administration in 1993. Active in community affairs, she served on the City of Visalia Retired Senior Volunteer Program Board of Directors and worked a term on the City of Visalia Parks and Recreation Commission. In 2003, she was presented with the Women of Distinction Award by Soroptimist International of Visalia for her community volunteer service. Always an animal lover, Willie was an active volunteer for PUPP (Prevent Unwanted Pet

Population) and was one of the founders of Valley Oak SPCA where she volunteered since its inception and worked as a member of the Board of Directors for over 20 years. Mom will be remembered most for her ability to laugh and have fun, be the ultimate hostess, cook amazing meals for the family and write special poems for her family's birthday cards. She was a smart businesswoman, a devoted friend and family member and an extremely strong person to the very end. Willadene is survived by her two children, Bryan Reitz (Wendy) of Visalia and Valletta Lochridge (Ed) of Exeter; her grandchildren Alison Delgado (Steven) of Visalia, Kyle Lochridge (Julie) of Los Angeles, Ali Greathouse (Tyler) of Oakhurst, Josh Costa and Shane Costa (Brittane); great-grandchildren Ellee, Naomi, Quorra, Leela, Roman, Malcolm and Kyzer; and many long-time friends. Graveside services will be held Thursday April 15th at 9:00am at the Visalia Cemetery. Memorial Tributes and Condolences may be offered by logging onto [www.salseranddillard.com](http://www.salseranddillard.com)

# Previous Events

## Graveside

APR **15**. 9:00 AM (PT)

Visalia District Cemetery  
1300 W Goshen Ave  
Visalia, CA 93291

# Tribute Wall



“ *Gracious Lavender Basket was purchased for the family of Willadene Reitz.*



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April 13, 2021 at 01:34 PM



“ *Heavenly Sentiments Spray was purchased for the family of Willadene Reitz.*



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April 13, 2021 at 12:45 PM



“ *Willie was the main reason I spent 10 years on the Board at VOSPCA, she was an inspiration, mentor, driven and straight forward on her stance towards her goals for all animals. I missed the times I had with Willie after she retired from the Board. Visalia will not be the same without Willie.*

*Gary Dill  
Cape Coral, Florida*

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**Gary L Dill** - April 10, 2021 at 11:11 AM

LB

“Willie and I were two of a group of women who went to the warm water pool at the Life Style gym to do exercises. We always had fun and loved talking about everything. I am sorry to read that she had passed away. Lois Bollinger

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**Lois Bollinger** - April 10, 2021 at 10:22 AM

TC

“Willadene was my neighbor and friend. She had this wonderful sense of humor and when she Laughed it was contagious. I love our visit in The park and are neighborhood get togethers. She was sweet, kind and caring. I loved her and shall miss her terribly. She is special. Tedi

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**Tedi Cocagne** - April 10, 2021 at 09:04 AM

RP

“Bryan and Valletta your mom was such a special lady. She always had a smile for me when she walked into the animal shelter. She had such passion for everything she did and she saw each task through to the end.....always with that smile. I am so thankful she was there whenever I needed to talk; she always knew just what to say and made sure I was always moving forward. So glad I was able to learn so much from Willie...she was amazing. My family will keep you in our prayers.

*Richard Phillips*

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**Richard Phillips** - April 10, 2021 at 12:27 AM