



Donna Lou Cortese

May 7, 1941 - May 30, 2025

Our beloved mother, grandmother and great-grandmother, Donna Lou Cortese, passed away on Friday May 30, 2025 at the age of 84.

Donna was born May 7, 1941, in Grand Rapids Michigan to Oscar and Roberta (Michael) Heilman. Early on her family lived in Buffalo NY, Boston Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania.

After graduating from Neshaminy High School (class of 1959), Donna went on to raise four children -- Adam, Jerry, Amy, and Vicki. Donna lovingly raised her family in Levittown PA, and Morris Plains NJ, before moving to Danville, CA. Donna also lived in Chico and Sacramento, CA for many years. She recently moved to Windsor, CA to be closer to family.

Donna is survived by her daughters, Amy Cortese (Karen) of Windsor, Vicki (Patrick) Powers of Santa Cruz, grand children, Cole and Devon, great grandson, Royal, daughter-in-law Teresa Cortese of Idaho, sister in law Annette Heilman of New York, and nephew Dan (Christina) Heilman, and many extended family relatives. She is predeceased by her sons, Adam and Jerry Cortese, her parents, Oscar and Roberta, and her brothers, Ted and Tim Heilman.

Donna cherished her family most of all, exemplifying the best qualities of unconditional love, generosity, and strength of spirit. Family time was deeply valued; vacations and shared moments were treasured highlights. Donna was very creative and an accomplished seamstress. She especially enjoyed making costumes for her grandchildren.

Donna's warmth, compassion, and sense of humor left a lasting impression on everyone she met. Donna had a remarkable ability to connect with others quickly and meaningfully. Within minutes of meeting someone, she would connect and know where they were from, how many children they had, where they went to school, etc. Throughout her professional working life, Donna was a bookkeeper working in the accounting department for various companies. She exemplified integrity, hard work, and resilience.

Donna personified true strength that comes from being a gentle, loving, and compassionate person. She was adored by her family and loved by many.

Donna will be greatly missed by all that loved and knew her.

The family is grateful for the staff at Brookdale, Windsor for the wonderful care and support over the last year. The family will have a private celebration of life at a later date. Rest in peace mom, we will always love you.