



Frances "Fran" Elizabeth Solitro

June 2, 1936 - May 18, 2026

Frances ("Fran") Elizabeth Solitro of Bradenton, Florida, passed away peacefully at home on May 18, 2026, surrounded by the people and animals she loved most. She was 89 years old.

Born on June 2, 1936, in Providence, Rhode Island, to Michael and Nancy (Di Mauro) Solitro, Fran carried the spirit of New England with her wherever life took her, especially her lifelong devotion to the Boston Red Sox.

A true self-made woman ahead of her time, Fran built and owned successful restaurant chains through hard work, sharp instincts, and unwavering determination, retiring in her 50s after an accomplished business career. [L] [SEP]

[L] [SEP]

Though successful, she remained remarkably humble, never seeking recognition for her achievements or generosity. Fran believed deeply in quietly and sincerely helping others, giving without ever expecting anything in return. [L] [SEP]

[L] [SEP]

She gave from the heart, supporting countless charitable causes and community organizations. She later found a deeply supportive spiritual home at the Metropolitan Community Church, where she was a dedicated member and benefactor for many years.

Fran was known for her quick wit, sharp sense of humor, and fiercely loyal heart. She was the kind of friend who showed up, stood by you, and never forgot those she loved. [L] [SEP]

[L] [SEP]

Her compassion extended far beyond people. She was committed to rescuing poodles, opening both her home and her heart to dogs in need. Her beloved poodles, Callie and Remy, brought her endless comfort and joy.

Throughout her life, Fran enjoyed tennis and golf, and later found happiness in reading, gardening, jigsaw puzzles, and traveling the world. Yet no matter how far she traveled, some of her happiest moments were at home, watching the Boston Red Sox — win or lose — with a poodle curled up beside her. [L] [SEP]

[L] [SEP]

Above all, Fran's heart belonged to her family and her home. She was an incredibly devoted partner, a protective aunt, and a joyful presence in the lives of her relatives.

Fran was preceded in death by her parents and her sisters, Bella Ferretti and Anna Mazzone.

She is survived by her loving spouse of 49 years, Ann Vassilaros; her beloved poodles, Callie and Remy; and many cherished family members, dear friends, and all those fortunate enough to experience her kindness, humor, and generosity.

A Celebration of Life will be held on June 6 at 2:00 p.m. at Church of the Trinity, 7255 N. Lockwood Ridge Road, Sarasota, Florida.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Fran's memory to Florida Poodle Rescue (P.O. Box 7336, St. Petersburg, FL 33734) or St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

Fran leaves behind a legacy of resilience, loyalty, compassion, and quiet generosity — a life beautifully lived and deeply felt by everyone who knew her.

Previous Events

A Celebration of Life

JUN 6. 2:00 PM (ET)

Church of the Trinity
7255 N. Lockwood Ridge Road
Sarasota, FL 34243

Tribute Wall

GA

“ Ann and Irene my heart goes out to you both. I hope that through this time of healing you will find comfort in all the memories that you've had with Fran while she was here. I love you guys so much!
❤️

Gail - June 01 at 12:04 AM

AV

Thank you

Ann Vassilaros - June 01 at 07:24 PM

JA

“ Fran & Irene -- So sorry for your loss. Our thoughts are with you both
Jim & Kathy Haft

jameshaft - May 31 at 05:49 PM

SS

“ After my partner of many years died, I saw that there was an MCC church nearby. For two Sundays I tried to find it but the then-dirt road deterred me. I went one more time and found a most welcoming group of people. Fran could always see a new face and she and Ann introduced themselves. It was through church and Ann and Fran that I met Ellen. One special time was when they stood with us during our ring ceremony at church. From there there was golf, baseball games, Olivia cruises, and warm get togethers at their homes. Fran never asked for anything in return for her kindness. So many beautiful memories. Take care of yourself, Ann. You gave your all to Fran.
Sheila

Sheila Sullivan - May 25 at 03:42 PM

AV

Thank you

Ann Vassilaros - May 25 at 08:18 PM

JB

“ Dearest Ann, we heard, from mutual friends, your sad news : please, receive our deepest sympathy for your loss. Some people leave a lasting impression, even if we only see them on rares occasions - Fran was one of these persons. Although she was not the most talkative in a group, her sense of humour, her smile, her helpfulness spoke for her, of her. We wish you, Ann, a peaceful mourning. You will always be welcome in our home if you fancy a trip to Montreal. Adena and I are sad with you. Hugs. Janick

Janick Belleau - May 25 at 03:16 PM

AV

Thank you

Ann Vassilaros - May 25 at 08:16 PM

JF

“ Sadly, we said goodbye to Fran. Fran has been family to us for many years. She will be missed but will be in my heart with love forever. For Ann who sat by her side constantly, comforting her, we send our love and prayers always.

Jo Farrand - May 24 at 07:58 PM

AV

Thank you

Ann Vassilaros - May 24 at 08:21 PM

JM

“ When we moved down to Bradenton more than 20 years ago, we met Ann and Fran through friends at church. We became friends through association at first, but it didn't take long for them to become our extended family. And what a blessing that we've been so grateful for ever since!

We loved the gatherings at Palma Sola, birthday celebrations, boat trips watching for dolphins, the white pelicans flying in their formation or just floating along, and the beautiful sunsets from the dock over the water. They are all cherished memories.

Fran was honest and sincere, quietly generous and one of the wisest people I've ever known.

You could trust her to speak her mind but never in a disrespectful way.

We shared a love for orchids and sports, (as long as I didn't root for the NY Yankees), jigsaw puzzles and our pets, for her the mini poodles, especially Desi and Callie, both velcro to Fran. I loved her sense of humor. Recently as we were leaving one of our visits, I said "Go Red Sox!" And she replied "Yeah, go somewhere!"

We know when friends like Fran leave us they are never truly gone from our hearts. There is definitely an empty space and a sadness to go along with that.

But in time, we'll be smiling as we remember her, knowing she is in heaven looking out for her loved ones and cursing the Red Sox awful season.

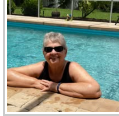
Ann, we loved Fran very much. The last few months have been rough. Know that we are here for you, however you need.

Judith Myers - May 24 at 07:52 PM

AV

Thank you

Ann Vassilaros - May 24 at 08:21 PM



I have known Fran for 20+ years We became baseball buddies attending spring training games as much as possible . We were never chatty we didn't need words to enjoy one another's company. Fran was my rock in so many ways and I will forever be grateful for her straight talk and support. Just an all around true friend and I will miss her

Ellen Covert - May 25 at 09:40 AM

AV

Thank you

Ann Vassilaros - May 25 at 12:35 PM

BP

“*Fran, thank you for being my friend for over 30 years, Mark's over 40. We spent so many wonderful holidays at your table, and you always treated us as if we were your most important guests. The truth is that you and Ann were really our best friends in all the ways that count: loyalty, honesty, and love. I will always think of you watching baseball and football on tv, doing puzzles in your office, and playing with Sasha and all of the other pups you adopted over the years. When we first met, I was loud, obnoxious, and conceited, but you showed me that the smartest person in the room is usually the most quiet, humble, and modest. I never knew then you'd become one of my most cherished role models. I love you and will miss you always, Brent (and Mark).*”

Brent Pottieger - May 24 at 03:43 PM

AV

Thank you

Ann Vassilaros - May 24 at 05:37 PM

JP

“ Auntie you came from humble beginnings and achieved much respect and admiration for what you accomplished in life, while never forgetting where you came from or your family. You were the family monarch, the strongest women I have ever known but also one with the biggest heart. I will miss you dearly.
Ann you were her strength in many ways, never forget how much she loved you or how much we all appreciate the love and support you gave her.

Joanne Mazzone Provost - May 24 at 03:41 PM

AV

Thank you

Ann Vassilaros - May 24 at 06:13 PM

MF

“ To my wonderful Aunt and Godmother. Your intelligence, compassion, generosity and advice has guided me throughout my life. You taught us all that women with confidence and tenacity could be whatever we set our minds to. You showed us that family and friends should always be cherished. Your love of animals, sports and politics was passed on to me and now my children. To Ann, you have our deepest sympathy and appreciation. You have been the best life partner Auntie Frances could have ever hoped for. We love you and will miss you, Jane, Carl, Ashlee and Andrew

MaryJane Ferretti - May 24 at 02:12 PM

AV

Thank you

Ann Vassilaros - May 24 at 02:44 PM

MT

“ Auntie Frances was truly one of a kind. A wonderful Aunt with a heart of gold always caring deeply for her family. One of my earliest memories as a child was when we went to make our own ice cream at her Carvel store. Also having her cherished poodles around every time she visited RI. Her love, generosity and wisdom will always be remembered. Thank you Ann for all your devotion. You are in our thoughts and prayers. Auntie will be greatly missed.

With deepest sympathy and love,

Michele, Rick and family

Michele Thibault - May 24 at 10:12 AM

AV

Thank you

Ann Vassilaros - May 24 at 02:55 PM

SG

“ I met Fran about 20 years ago when I was hired to do a small job at an investment property. The county had deemed a small kitchenette there “illegal,” and it needed to be removed. She and I talked things over for a while, and we both agreed that the best plan was to remove the cabinets and sink and hide them so the county would be satisfied — and then, as soon as they left, we could hook everything back up :). I liked the way she thought.

What really stood out to me was when she stopped by on her way home to check on things. She noticed I was sweating like crazy and had forgotten to pack any water. Within five minutes, she was back with some of the coldest water I have ever tasted. I never imagined that one small referral job would forever change my life.

Ann, I am so sorry for your loss. Words cannot express what you both have meant to my family. Please know that we are here for you.

Scott Godfrey - May 24 at 09:45 AM

AV

Thank you

Ann Vassilaros - May 24 at 02:45 PM

JW

“ Fran finally found a reason to ignore phone calls. Her friend, Trudy Blumenthal, probably met Fran at the “pearly gates” and said, “Frances, I got us truck; we leave for Home Depot in one hour.” If there’s golf in heaven, Fran’s playing with Anna (sister), Johnny (brother-in-law), and Trudy...telling Trudy to stop complaining and hit the God damn ball! Fran was a generous and kind person making people feel comfortable, welcomed and loved. We love and miss you and know you’re charming everyone that came to greet you on the other side. Ann, we love you.

Jeanne M. Weber - May 24 at 08:40 AM

AV

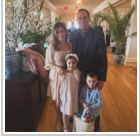
Thank you

Ann Vassilaros - May 24 at 02:54 PM

AL

We met Fran and Ann through her niece Nancy and her partner Jeanne. We were welcomed into their home with big smiles and open arms. They took us on their deck boat and let us swim in their pool at Palma Sola. They always made us feel welcome. I had the pleasure of watching their beloved poodles when they were on vacation. She knew her Callie was a tough little girl and she would say you can pet her. As Callie was sitting on her lap giving me the look I did and Callie and I became friends. I knew Fran was a big Red Sox fan and Barbara and I being from NY were big Yankee fans. We always talked about how our teams were doing and if there was a shot in either team going to the playoffs. We always had something nice to say about both teams. This one is for you Fran, GO RED SOX! We will miss your beautiful smile.

Annamarie LoCascio - May 25 at 10:00 AM



“ We are so deeply sorry for your loss. Auntie will live forever in our hearts and will always be watching over us, guiding and protecting us. We love you so much and will be forever grateful for all the love, care, and devotion you gave her throughout her life. Sending you our love, prayers, and deepest condolences during this difficult time.
- Fiocco Family

Bianca Fiocco - May 23 at 05:26 PM

JL

I met Fran and Ann at Church of the Trinity MCC almost 20 years ago. She has always inspired me to become a better person through her acts of kindness and generosity. We share a lot of stories about the poodles that have come to us from Florida Poodle Rescue. She was loved and will be missed by so many of us.

James Lachapelle - May 23 at 05:52 PM

CA

“ Love and miss you so much already!!! You will be missed my so many! Thank you for everything and for coming in to my life!!!

Cathy - May 20 at 11:23 PM

AV

Thank you

Ann Vassilaros - May 24 at 02:56 PM

JG

“ When I first met Fran in 1972 It was immediately clear I was in the company of an extraordinary person. Fran had an innate ability to do the right thing, always protective of those she held dear. Her keen sense of humor delighted everyone. Her pride in Kim and Keith lasted forever. Her devotion extended not just to her family but to many of her friends as well. No doubt, Fran was a gem of a person—one in a million, and our lives will never be the same without her.

judy Greene - May 20 at 11:21 PM

MN

Learning that Fran had passed, our memories of 'firsts' that we had experienced together, came pouring fortha Gulf of Mexico boat ride with three dolphins performing, an introduction to HardRock, frylators that she purchased for the church fish fries.....
She was an impressive role model for all...
But Fran is to be remembered and admired for her endless generosity to family, friends and community.
We miss you already. Love Mary and Mary Jo

Mary Jo Mugnier/ mary m nowd - May 23 at 07:50 PM

AV

Thank you

Ann Vassilaros - May 24 at 10:21 PM

NR

“ Auntie will always be in our hearts.. we love you Ann. You were there taking care of her for so long, made sure she had whatever she needed. Your angel will now be watching over you...we did see the rainbow tonight... it was a sign she is watching over all of us.
We love you Ann ❤️

Nancy Ruggieri - May 20 at 08:27 PM

AV

Thank you

Ann Vassilaros - May 24 at 06:14 PM



“ *Ann you are a devoted partner by her side right to the end. We love you, sending love & support. Fly high Auntie you will be missed.*

Deb Mazzone - May 20 at 08:11 PM

AV

Thank you

Ann Vassilaros - May 24 at 02:55 PM