



Sue Russell Michel

November 2, 2022

At sunrise on November 2, 2022, Sue Russell Michel passed away peacefully at the age of 86. She is survived by her husband John, children Jerry and Amy, her grandchildren Sophie, Bella, Daisy, and Annabelle, her brother Tom, and her sister Sally.

Born in 1936 in Mansfield, Ohio, Sue moved to Sarasota (with her parents M.E. and Phyllis Russell) at an early age where she soon made lifelong friends. Over the years, these friends gathered regularly in the market for coffee, around the dinner table for good wine, food, and Jack Daniels, and lively game nights. A 1954 graduate of Sarasota High School, 1958 graduate of Ohio Wesleyan, and member of the Alpha Chi Omega sorority, she was a Sarasotan through and through.

Married in 1957 to John Michel (their first date was while studying abroad in Mexico,) their early life took them to El Paso, TX. But the gravitational pull of the Gulf Coast beaches sent them chugging back home to Sarasota in a Volkswagen held together by rubber bands and that had to be pushed uphill.

Both their children, Jerry and Amy, were born in Sarasota and life was well documented with roughly 128,432 pictures, all stored in slide carousels, because this was pre-digital...a 21st century technology that served as a constant thorn in Mama Sue's side, sending at least one (that we know of)

laptop bouncing across the room. There is not a supercomputer yet invented that can count all the photos taken. After her grandchildren (to whom she was known as Tan Sue), a significant amount of the pictures are of random flowers.

The family business, Florida Educational Paperbacks, took the family to Tampa, where Sue's role of Head Honchita led to the creation of hundreds of "New From FEP" newsletters, all of which had at least one mistake that was never discovered until after publication. But still, Sarasota called, and John and Sue returned to Sarasota, Siesta and Longboat Keys.

Life was filled with long swims and walks, and travels to the four corners of the world to wherever blue-footed boobies and their ilk could be found wandering the beaches. Along the way, buckets of seashells were collected, enough to build the foundation for the roof garden for their balcony garden at Library Mews. Not that any of the seashells were actually sacrificed for such an endeavor; instead, they were artistically rearranged in artistic patterns only rivaled by the elaborate Christmas displays featuring nativity scenes from around the world.

Mama Sue never met a book she could finish without falling asleep first, a salad that had too little dressing (dry arugula, really?), a grandchild she couldn't love to pieces, a tidewater she wouldn't explore, or a chance recreate a Degas pose for the camera. We can all still hear the jangle of her gold bracelets, her quick laugh and will remember her champagne flute filled with red wine so not to dirty another glass.

Friends and family, please join us in remembering Mama Sue. Raise a toast, fall asleep with your glasses on, and hug your kittens (even if they won't let you). Celebrations of life with family and friends will take place at a later date. Until then, she would welcome your donation to Planned Parenthood in lieu of

flowers or gifts.

Nature's first green is gold, / Her hardest hue to hold. / Her early leaf's a
flower; / But only so an hour.

Then leaf subsides to leaf. / So Eden sank to grief, / So dawn goes down to
day. / Nothing gold can stay.