



Katerina Ruby

MAY 15, 1936 - APR 18, 2015



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KATERINA MILIOPULOS RUBY, 78, of Memphis, passed away Saturday, April 18, 2015 after a short illness. Katerina (known as Nina to her family and friends) led a life full of family, faith, and determination that can be summed up in a phrase she often used: “We’ll find a way.” Born May 15, 1936 in her parents’ home in the Beyoglu section of Istanbul, Turkey, she was the oldest daughter of Vasili and Androniki Miliopulos, who have preceded her in death. The family owned a grocery in “is tin Poli” (the City) and focused on faith and education for all their five children. Being Greek Orthodox in the prominently Muslim Istanbul, the Miliopulos family found a way for all their children to attend schools where they would be able to celebrate their Greek heritage. Nina attended the American College for Girls, in the Arnavutkoy section of Istanbul, from seventh grade until graduating in 1958. Excelling in math, history and languages, she dreamed of furthering her education in the United States. At the time, Turkey was a closed country, and it was very difficult to obtain permission to leave the country for any reason. However, she was determined to find a way and with her parents’ and teachers’ help, researched and applied to several U.S. colleges. A special women’s college answered her letters, and Nina found advocates and a home at Blue Mountain College in Blue Mountain, Mississippi. President of the college Dr. Lawrence T. Lowrey and his wife Tina were instrumental in helping Nina obtain a visa and gain admission to the U.S. In September 1958, with \$38.25 in her pocket and boundless excitement, Nina boarded a plane to attend school in America. She studied chemistry and history, was a member of the Eunomian Society, and graduated in June 1962. On a blind date in 1959, she met Memphis State University student James S. “Pete” Ruby, Jr. After graduation from Blue Mountain, Nina and Pete were married at Springdale Methodist Church in Memphis on June 8, 1962. Pete, who survives her in life, was her devoted husband for almost 53 years. They settled in the Frayser section of Memphis



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and began raising a family. Daughters Sylvia Lynne (married to Tim Imm, of Atlanta, GA) and Julia Michele (married to James Eason, of Memphis) were born in the coming years. She was passionate about the opportunities for education and freedom she found here and became a naturalized American citizen in 1967. Later the family lived in the Raleigh area and finally in East Memphis. Nina was determined to help her family immigrate to America and experience the religious and personal freedom she had found. Naturally frugal and resourceful, she worked and saved to help her mother, brother, sister, and nephew to gain education and employment opportunities in the U.S. Nina was a lifelong learner. Throughout her life she focused on education for herself and others as not only a means to provide for her family, but also as a path to self-improvement and enjoyment. She was an accomplished seamstress, making clothes for herself, her daughters, and grandchildren; knitted, crocheted, and did needlepoint; explored ceramics, all kinds of crafts, and pottery; took ice-skating and taekwondo lessons; studied phlebotomy and took computer classes. She spoke four languages, loved reading, writing and teaching others. She also enjoyed collecting, and her home is full of finds from her travels. Even up to the time of her death, she was busy compiling a book of her memoirs as an American Greek from Istanbul. She was also a tireless and energetic worker, whatever the task. She worked at the Memphis and Shelby County Health Department in the South Memphis clinic during the 1970s, and provided home health care for elderly patients during the 1980s. During the 1990s and 2000s, she spent time enjoying her grandchildren and helping with their care: Jake Burton of Memphis, Taylor Burton of Brooklyn, New York, and Chip Eason of Memphis. While the earlier years of her life she immersed herself in the culture of her new country and raised her family, during the later years, Nina focused on returning to her international roots and contributing to the community. Trips to Greece, New York, and Paris brought her closer to her family. She became active in a group of international women in Memphis who met regularly to share experiences and coffee. Also Nina took time to attend alumni events at Blue Mountain College, and served at the Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church in Memphis, including treasurer of Pholoptochos and recording secretary of Daughters of Penelope. In addition to her



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husband, daughters, sons-in-law, and grandchildren, she is survived by sister Maria Miliopulos Neshiewat of Queens, New York; sister Helene Miliopulos Bigare and husband Patrice, of Le Mans, France; brother-in-law and sister-in-law Ken and Susan Ruby, of Memphis; cousin Rallou Miliopulos of Korinthos, Korinthia, Greece; sisters-in-law Stella Miliopulos of Lindenhurst, New York, and Froso Miliopulos, of Athens, Greece; and nieces and nephews Jacqueline Neshiewat Barlis and husband Jimmy, of Jackson Heights, New York; John Neshiewat and wife Ruba, of Poughkeepsie, New York; Vasilis (Billy) Neshiewat and fiancée Miladys, of Norwalk, Connecticut; Paris Miliopulos and wife Catherine, of Lindenhurst, New York; Elena Miliopulos of Lindenhurst, New York; David Bigare of Paris, France; Andreas Miliopulos and wife Athena, of Koropi, Attiki, Greece; and Nikos and Alexi Miliopulos of Athens, Greece. She was preceded in death by her parents, and brothers Yannis Miliopulos of Athens, Greece; and Demetrios (Takis) Miliopulos of Lindenhurst, New York. Visitation will be 5-7 p.m., Tuesday, April 21 at Memorial Park Funeral Home and Cemetery. Funeral services will be held at Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church, 573 N. Highland Street in Memphis, on Wednesday, April 22 at 11a.m. Burial will follow in Memorial Park Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to The Katerina Miliopulos Ruby Memorial Scholarship Fund, Blue Mountain College, P.O. Box 160, 201 West Main Street, Blue Mountain, Mississippi, 38610. This annual scholarship will assist deserving international students in their pursuit of learning at Blue Mountain College. Funeral arrangements have been entrusted to Memorial Park Funeral Home and Cemetery, 5668 Poplar Ave. Memphis, TN 38119, "Behind the Stone Wall."



Tribute Wall

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CB

Chuck Bryant posted:

I truly enjoyed the memorial video. This unique lady with her abundance of life and ever the picture of elegance... just as I recall her those many years ago. Thoughts and prayers for the family. Shine on Katerina

April 21 at 6:17 PM

JS

Jackie Sweet posted:

To the family and friends of Katrina, Please accept my condolences and "May you have undeserred kindness and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Corinthians 1:3. Sincerely, Jackie

April 21 at 5:14 PM

SL

Susan Lovelace posted:

Susan Lovelace purchased the Enchanted Cottage for the family of Katerina Ruby.

April 21 at 1:21 PM

CP

Connie Paul posted:

Sylvia: I just watched the beautiful tribute of your Mother's life and I only wish I had known her. The love she had for her family and friends is evident in every single photo. I know that she had a beautiful life. I can tell she was an awesome Mother, Grandmother, and Wife. While I know the sorrow and loss you are feeling today, you will always find comfort in your memories with her. God Bless each of you today and in the year ahead. Love you, my friend! Connie Paul (Steve, too)

April 20 at 2:17 PM

JD

Judd, Lady Jane, Judy And Dorothy posted:

Judd, Lady Jane, Judy and Dorothy purchased the Pink Tribute Spray for the family of Katerina Ruby.

April 20 at 10:01 AM

MP

Memorial Park posted:

Lovely One Spathiphyllum Plant was purchased for the family of Katerina Ruby.

April 20 at 9:45 AM



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RT

Rose Trask posted:

Sylvia, your Mom's Love will never leave you. That is what's left when the physical life is over. I'm praying for your Family's strength during this time. Rose Trask

April 20 at 7:45 AM

CW

Carol Walk posted:

Sylvia, I am so very sorry that you haave lost your mom. I am thinking about you and your family. Stay strong and remember the joy that your mom brought to your life. Carol Walk

April 20 at 5:53 AM

PA

Pam posted:

Pam purchased the Heartwarming Thoughts Boston Fern for the family of Katerina Ruby.

April 19 at 5:48 PM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Katerina by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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