



Willie Pauline Lavender Cummins

March 23, 1924 - March 8, 2022

Willie Pauline Lavender Cummins

This southern belle homemaker and lover of flowers and animals, Willie Pauline Lavender Cummins, known to most as "Willie" and lovingly to her only brother as "Bill," has slipped away from us in her home surrounded by her daughter and son and caregivers at 2:07 in the afternoon on Tuesday, March 8, 2022. Willie was born in her parent's home off a red dirt road in the rural area of Braggs, Alabama, to Mettie Bell Stabler Lavender and John "Jack" Decatur Lavender on March 23, 1924. She grew up on the beautiful homeland of 200 acres in the rural south running free in the woods, fishing in the creeks and ponds, and gathering wildflowers. Willie's favorite pet was a chicken named "Terpins," that she raised since it was a chick.

Willie attended a one-room schoolhouse in Braggs near Till's Pond for her schooling until she went to Hayneville High School, where she was an "A" student who excelled in music and art. She had a lovely voice and was the lead in many vocal recitals. Willie loved music and dancing and attended many dances and concerts at Tills Pond, where her cousin, Hank Williams, and his band would play on Saturday nights. She would reader follow him to other Alabama towns to listen to Hank's band and dance with him in-between sets. One summer, Willie stayed with her oldest sister to help take care of her sister's newborn second child, Johnny, and two-year-old toddler, Joe Jr., during her early teens. This was her first lesson in Motherhood caring. After high school, Willie stayed with an uncle and aunt in

Selma, Alabama, to work in a drug store and eventually became a long-distance operator for Bell South. She was excellent at this, and they had designs for her to grow with the company.

Willie had numerous proposals during her teens, a true southern beauty with many beaux and suitors. The suitor who won out was John Rudolph "Rudy" Cummins, a transport and combat fighter pilot in training at the base in Selma from Lake Arthur, New Mexico. They were married on October 30, 1943, in Waycross, Georgia. She remained with her parents in Braggs, Alabama, after Rudy was deployed to a combat fighter squadron in Italy during World War II. Willie's first child (a girl), Mettie, was born in Greenville, Alabama. After Rudy was shot down for the third time, he resigned from the Air Force, and the family of three moved to Roswell, New Mexico, which became Willie's home for the rest of her lifetime. After they settled in Roswell, she had three sons: Rudy Jr., Little Larry, and Terry. Willie was transformed from the deep green south to the open horizons and sunsets of the Southwest and learned to love it with a passion.

She was a member of the First United Methodist Church for seventy-five years. Willie served as a schoolroom Mom, a Cub-Scout and Boy Scout Mom, and a Little League Baseball Mom for many years to help out and take part as best she could during her children's educational years. She would take her children back to Alabama for the entire summer every year to know their southern family as well as their Southwestern family. Willie wanted them to know all about their roots. Willie was an avid gardener and loved working in her yard and flower beds. She had a wonderful passion for flowers of all kinds and trees and scrubs. Willie was especially fond of roses, lilies, iris, crepe myrtles, and azaleas. She had a divine rapport with animals of all kinds, and they seemed to sense this as various sorts would often end up in her yard for adoption. Willie especially loved cats, bunnies, turtles, roosters, chickens, squirrels, birds of all kinds, and deer. She has 12 turtles hibernating in her yard right now, and she would feed the squirrels, doves, and turtles every day.

Willie was a regular Snow White and St. Francis of Assisi as she tamed the squirrels enough that they would take peanuts right from her hand. She was an avid reader and read many novels and the Roswell newspaper from Cover to cover. Willie was a beautiful seamstress who made lovely dresses and accessories using her fine point needlework. For fun, Willie liked to do paint by numbers and cutouts. She enjoyed watching classic movies such as "Gone with The Wind" and "Godfather," pro tennis, golf, and the Dallas Cowboys football. Willie was a delicious cook. She wanted her children to be musicians, so she enrolled them in piano, steel guitar, tap dance, and acrobatics. Willie wished she could play the piano, so she hoped her children would learn and play for her.

Willie is survived by her daughter, Mettie Pauline Lavender Cummins and her son Ernest Terrance "Terry" Cummins and wife Corby Howe Cummins all of Roswell, New Mexico; granddaughter, Shawn and husband Jason Price of San Antonio, Texas; great-grandson Zachary Price of San Antonio, Texas; nieces and nephews: Joe Jr Crook and wife Betty of Minter, Alabama; nephew's spouse, Kathryn Crook of Fort Deposit, Alabama; Jimmy Crook and wife Joyce of Minter, Alabama; Jean and husband Rusty Hussey of Minter, Alabama; Derilyn and husband David Lee of Montgomery, Alabama; Sidney Taylor and wife Alana of Panama City, Florida; Keith Taylor and wife Sandy of Greenville, Alabama; Larry Bostick and Wife Anne of Brownwood, Texas; Patricia Bostick Russell of San Antonio, Texas; Ferron Sutton and wife Krista and children Karli and Kayden of Roswell, New Mexico; and numerous other nieces, nephews, cousins as well as her devoted cats, Calico and KC.

Willie was preceded in death by her husband Rudy, sons: Ernest Lawrence "Little Larry" Cummins ...her angel, and her PFC John Rudolph Cummins, Jr. (Rudy US Army paratrooper with the 101 St Airborne, 1 Air Cavalry Division who lost his life at 19 years old in the Vietnam conflict; parents: Mettie Bell

Stabler Lavender and John "Jack" Decatur Lavender; mother-in-law and father-in-law: Nimmie Hazel Kenmore and Ernest Lawrence Cummins of Lake Arthur, New Mexico; her grandparents William Warren Stabler and Ida Pauline Till; Edward, Clayton Lavender and Annie Francis Moorer; great-grandparents: Dr. Charles Etchison Lavender and Elizabeth Clayton; James Laemanuel Stabler and Louisa Manning; Steven Decatur Moorer and Mary Frances Snow; John Nicholas Till and Arenva Amanda Lester all of Alabama; sisters: Myrtle Crook and husband Joe Hut of Minter, Alabama, Elsie Ryals and husband Culbert of Fort Deposit, Alabama, Anabelle Taylor, and husband Eddie of Greenville, Alabama; and brother, Edward C. Lavender and wife Pat of Montgomery, Alabama; nieces and nephews: Fern Alice Ryals, Jackie Lavender, Bob Ed Lavender, Steve Ryals, Pam Ryals Longest, Norma Ryals Morton, and Johnny Crook, all of Alabama, and Glenda Sutton of Ruidoso, New Mexico; as well as many aunts, uncles, cousins, friends, classmates, and her devoted precious pets: Powackie, Ashley, Spot, and Rhett.

Serving as Pallbearers are Ferron and Kayden Sutton of Roswell and Troy Hinton of Portales, New Mexico, John Arthur Crook of Mount Willing, Alabama.

A special "thank you" to Kindred Hospice and especially to Glen Shelton, RN of Carlsbad, and Stacy Maxwell, who were with Willie right up to the end and took such good care of her. Thank you to Chaplin Tim who played the guitar and sang such beautiful hymns to Willie.

A huge thank you to our cousin, Cel McCraw (Our special "Angel.") who came from Oklahoma to spend time with and took such wonderful care of Willie" .her-2nd Mother. And thank you to Tammy Trujillo for giving our mother such tender care.

The family invites you to join them in a celebration of Willie's life in the Chapel

at Anderson Bethany Funeral Home at 2609 S. Main Street on Tuesday, March 15, 2022, at 2:00 pm with Rev. Laird Cross officiating. Interment will follow at South Park Cemetery on South Main Street.

Willie's tribute was written in her honor.

Previous Events

Celebration

MAR 15. 2:00 PM.

Anderson Bethany Funeral Home

Tribute Wall



“ *Willie Pauline Lavender Cummins*

December 29, 2022 at 05:26 PM



“ *Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Willie Pauline Lavender Cummins.*



March 14, 2022 at 09:41 AM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Willie Pauline Lavender Cummins.*



March 13, 2022 at 07:06 PM