



## Ann NeJame

September 24, 1932 - April 28, 2020

Ann NeJame ended this life's journey in peace and love on April 28th. She was a remarkable woman. Born on September 24th, 1932, in Winsted, Connecticut to loving and hard-working Lebanese parents, Phillip and Edna NeJame, she went to Boston as a very young woman to obtain her Medical Assistant degree. She later moved to Orlando in 1953 where she lived until her passing. Her entire career was dedicated to helping children. As a Lab Technician, she worked at Pediatric Associates for 37 years in Orlando, caring for thousands of kids over different generations. She remains lovingly remembered by so many for her gentle allergy work ups and blood draws of the children. She loved the work, people, and patients and continued to visit, even after her retirement. Among her duties was working hand in hand assisting to open then Central Florida's only pediatric oncology lab, helping children with cancer. A few years ago the Nurse's Station at Arnold Palmer Hospital for Children was named for and dedicated to her. She never cared about accolades She was always humble but that along with the many other recognitions and thanks she received over the years did bring her a smile knowing that she had made a difference and touched the lives of so many.

Her greatest joy in life was her family. Many came to know her as Granny Ann, a moniker she adored. She was equally proud of all three of her children, Mark, Paula and Chris. She reveled in the love of her grandchildren, great-grandchildren and her beloved sister, Marie, and Marie's extended family. She

loved and embraced everyone's spouses as well.

She married at 21 but left after 10 years of marriage due to her husband's disease of alcoholism. She developed a strength and tenacity that would last her a lifetime. A single mother who never received child support, she and her children moved in with and shared a duplex with her beloved mother. She worked tirelessly, often with two jobs, to take care of her children. There wasn't much financially, but there was always a full refrigerator, a roof over the family's heads, and her unquestionable love. Regardless of the meager finances, she always made sure there would be an annual vacation. For two weeks every summer, she loaded up her 3 kids, the family dog Bingo, and one full suitcase in the front trunk of the Volkswagen Bug and she'd drive to the family holiday, once even going to Key West and shark fishing.

She would bring homemade cookies and goodies to the butcher's at Publix, among others, and would embrace and feed any friend her kids brought home. She loved dogs and treated them like the people. She was literally everyone's go to person for advise whenever they had a health issue. She was always positive and was never a slave to negativity. Her weakness was sweets. She loved her sweets and the faces of ecstasy she would make as she bit into one of her favorites were glorious. Food was a huge part of her life and culture. She'd shop a half dozen stores for the best price or freshest produce. She'd offer to share whatever she may be eating with whoever was around. Sharing food was an expression of loving and she shared and loved generously. She was a fantastic cook and generously shared her famous eggnog, homemade chocolates, or dinner feasts. She traveled, entertained, and was the family matriarch.

For the many years after her divorce, she dated only two men. Both died of cancer. Both she helped care for. That's the way she was.

She smoked in the 60's and when the health warnings came out in the 70's she listened and stopped. Nevertheless, 25 years after stopping she developed lung cancer and had an entire lung removed. Her life expectancy was estimated to be around 5 years. For 24 years this warrior woman kept moving forward, letting nothing stop her. Despite innumerable skin cancers, a debilitating accident, and other surgeries and health complications, she was unstoppable. During the last few years, the missing lung and her COPD took more of a toll, causing her to be short of breath and unable to walk any distance without stopping to regain her strength. Over the last couple of years, her mobility was extremely limited and she was confined to bed most of the time. She lived with each of her adoring children at times but after her last hospitalization she went to an Assisted Living facility where it was thought she may stay temporarily. She didn't leave. She loved it, the care was spectacular, and her family is forever grateful to the health care teams at Waterman Assisted Living in Mount Dora for the compassion, care, and loving attention so many there gave her. Her family visited her daily.

Granny Ann had a spectacular and wry sense of humor. The care staff at Waterman loved her as she joked with them in between asking about their families, offering them food, and even providing some wisdom and counseling regarding love and life. Her beaming smile would light up a room. Similarly, she wouldn't need to say a word when she gave you her famous "eye" noting her displeasure with something.

She was with hospice for several months. The caretakers, from Cornerstone Hospice, were angels on earth. Once again, Granny Ann defied death and wasn't leaving until it was on her terms. She rebounded so many times over 24 years that there were literally too many to remember or count. In some ways she was thought to be invincible. She and her family knew better, but at 87 years old she had laughed in the face of death so many times.

When Covid-19 hit, families were banned from entering Assisted Living facilities. She and her family were blessed however. Because of her hospice status, her children visited her constantly. As she declined over the last few days from COPD, other immediate family were permitted in to say their final goodbyes, including her beloved younger sister Marie Shaw, and her family. Her endlessly dedicated and loving friend, Dr. Lucy Lagod, came for one last visit. So much love exuded from all. She left this life's journey filled with love, peace, and painlessly. Her hair was being stroked, her hand held, and knowing her job was done on earth, the last words she heard were "It's ok, Mom. It's time for you to rest. I love you." She was unafraid as she took her last breath.

She lived and taught a life of compassion, love, manners, hard work, respect towards others, family, strength, and to be non-judgmental. She loved everyone, regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation, or otherwise.

She had no doubt that she would be with Jesus, God, and the other angels she would join as she was a strong Catholic. She left here painlessly, in peace and love, as we all hoped and prayed she would. That is a blessing for which her family, and those who knew and loved her will be forever grateful.

Granny Ann's survivors include her son Mark NeJame (Josie) and granddaughters Valentina and Alessandra; daughter Paula NeJame Tucker (John) and grandson Brandon NeJame (Julie) and great grandson Luc; granddaughter Dana Miller (Matt) and great granddaughter Haley; granddaughter Jenna (Aaron) and great grandson Rhett; granddaughter Lauren Tucker; daughter Chris NeJame Evans (Eric), grandson Larry NeJame (Allie) and great grandson Logan; her sister and brother-in-law Marie and Gary Shaw; niece Malia Brady (Jerry) and great niece Sofia; niece Lisa Sibons (Mark) and great niece Brittany Tryon (Tim), great-great niece Kali and

great-great nephew Dallas; great niece Tori Sibons; surrogate son Nick Wilson; and an endless number of friends, relatives, cousins, nieces and nephews from her prior marriage, admirers, and people she touched through her remarkable journey.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that any donations go to help pediatric cancer children through the Family Assistance Fund for Runway to Hope <http://runwaytohope.networkforgood.com/projects/100004-in-memoriam-of-runway-to-hope> or to Cornerstone Hospice <https://interland3.donorperfect.net/weblink/weblink.aspx?name=E346236&id=2>

The family of Ann Nejame invites you to leave a message of condolence on the Tribute Wall created in her honor.

# Tribute Wall

RT

“ I am so sorry Mark, Paula and Chris for the earthly loss of your sweet, incredible mother. I know we will see her again in Heaven and that she is there with that big, loving smile right now. I remember meeting her when Mark and I graduated from law school and many times over the years. You were blessed with an incredible Mom. I am praying for all of you and your children as you deal with this loss in your lives. I am always here for you, Love Rick Troutman

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**Rick Troutman** - May 15, 2020 at 08:50 AM

RL

“ My heartfelt sympathy to Mark and your family. That was a beautiful tribute to her in the paper, and such a nice way to honor your Mom on Mother's Day. Rick Lane

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**Rick Lane** - May 12, 2020 at 08:01 AM

SJ

“ I can remember Ann from such a young age growing up. She was the queen of entertaining. I loved hearing her give me advice on cooking and entertaining. I wanted to put on a dinner party just like her...the smallest of details were so intriguing to me. I know my mother adored her and her knowledge of the medical field, she actually saved my little brothers life. (He will be 50 this year). She touched so many peoples lives. Sending each of you strength, peace and a big hug. She will surely be missed. Love you all! Susan Jones ❤️

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**Susan Jones** - May 11, 2020 at 02:00 PM

BL

“ Working with Ann for 16 years at Pediatric Associates, was such a pleasure! I will always remember her with love and respect and so much laughter. Rest in peace, dear Ann!

Barbara Lang - May 11, 2020 at 11:32 AM



“ My deepest heart felt condolences to Mark and the NeJame family. My your mom rest in peace.  
Bob Ryan

Robert Ryan - May 10, 2020 at 06:44 PM

FS

“ I have so many wonderful memories of Aunt Ann! Love the NeJame/Shaw family. Always felt like I was another family member! Prayers & love and May you find pease now that Aunt Ann is no longer suffering & with God!  
Fran Shuler

Fran Shuler - May 10, 2020 at 10:22 AM

DP

“ ANN and I were the absolute best of friends in and out of the Pediatric Office. She was my best friend and she taught me so much about life. I will forever miss her and will be reunited and laughing some day. Love to the family.

Dot Parker - May 10, 2020 at 09:55 AM

KP

“ ANN was truly the sweetest and most caring person. She and our Mother, Dot Parker, met and worked for decades at Pediatric Associates and became the best of friends. DAVID and I wish peace and love to the entire NeJame family and friends, as Ann’s passing is a loss to so many.

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**Kristin & David Parker** - May 10, 2020 at 09:51 AM

DM

“ I knew Ann through St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church and school. As students, families just grew up knowing our classmates, their parents & followed one another through the years. As an adult, I was surprised to see Ann running the lab at my own children’s pediatric office!  
Her warm smile, calming demeanor & wit made every visit to the doctor so much easier!  
Ann truly touched so many. The angels are dancing & laughing now with Ann! My thoughts & prayers are with the family at this time.

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**Denise Murphy** - May 10, 2020 at 08:09 AM

SM

My mother, Dorothy Pempey worked with Ann in the early years I believe in the Orlando office of Dr Andrew Townes. My sincere condolences to her family

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**Sharon Pempey Miller** - May 25, 2020 at 01:47 PM