



DONNA J (NEWELL) CURTIS

May 31, 1945 – November 1, 2018

My mom, Donna Jay Curtis, passed away November 1, 2018, in Utah with myself, Sheila Vance and my brother Gordon Mackenzie by her side. She was just 73 years old. She was amazingly strong, having fought through incredible back pain for many years. She fought the pain with an amazing will and mental strength.

My mom was an incredibly complex person, at her core was a desire to serve her community, give to those in need, take care of all the animals in the world, and always to be a mom to me and my brother and a grandma to my girls, Malia and Erika Vance.

Her journey began May 31, 1945 in Portland, OR, growing up with her older brother, David Newell (deceased) and older sister, Diane Newell (Ashland, OR). She attended Oregon State University where she met a recent Scottish immigrant, my dad, Jake Mackenzie. This led to adventures as an incredibly young mom of two and traveling a bit of the world. We ultimately ended up in Petaluma, CA. As she raised us there, she and my dad divorced, she finished her bachelor's degree and Masters in Public Administration as a single mom. She was avidly involved in local politics. She worked many years as a budget analyst for Sonoma County.

She found love again with her second husband, Robert Curtis (deceased) who ultimately provided her dream of travel. She moved a few times over the years, living in San Antonio, TX, Staten Island, NY and spent the last 16 years in Carson City, NV. She traveled to Europe, Russia, China, Egypt, South America and Antarctica.

While in Carson City she was able to follow her passion of public service as a Commissioner on the Parks Commission, Democratic Women's Club, member of the AAUW, several book clubs and multiple other charity groups. She was a founding member of the highly successful Sierra Nevada Forum where she led talks on wildlife issues that were extremely popular. She was passionate about progressive causes and politics. She was always ready to volunteer and pitch in for so many causes. Then there was her love of dogs. A lot of her civic work locally was to create dog parks. She

wanted a place for dogs to play safely and be with other dogs. I brought a therapy dog to mom in her last days and the smile on her face will be one I will always remember. Ultimately mom was funny, loving, so smart, giving, blunt, aggravating, loved a good debate, a mama bear for me and my brother and she just loved my girls and was so proud of them.

I so wish we had more time mom, thank you for everything and I love you.

In lieu of flowers, we will be collecting donations for the installation of a park bench in memorial of Donna J. Curtis and all her work for parks and dogs. Or donate to a local charity that cares for animals or children.