

Janice Jean Stilwell



Janice passed away from COVID and subsequent complications of underlying health conditions at the age 83. Honest, real, straightforward and human, Janice was wise in her own ways. Born Autistic with an extreme speech impediment, and mobility issues, she became incredibly brave and strong working with these life challenges. Kind and dear, even after all the pain, suffering and struggles she endured throughout her life, Janice remained good natured and light hearted. A survivor, with an incredible tolerance for pain, she persevered. She embraced life and lived her life fully. Janice had a passion for living and wanted live to the very end. She was an amazing person, who was an inspiration to many. Janice wanted to make her own life choices and to live independently. She loved buying clothes and her closet and dresser drawers were packed. She relished picking out and buying her own furniture and decorating her apartment. She was not afraid of color! Janice loved food! She was a good eater and had a well-nuanced sense of taste. She enjoyed planning out and cooking her meals. She was motivated, took on new challenges and embraced ways to empower herself. She never quit learning and growing. Other interests and favorite past times included walking uptown to go shopping, her vintage and heirloom doll collection, embroidering, coloring in adult coloring books and doing word puzzles. Janice drank root beer aka pop. She said it calmed her nerves and at times helped her sleep. Janice said her parents always encouraged her to stand up for herself. She was taught she would never be perfect and told she didn't need to be. Janice spoke her mind and knew what she liked and what she didn't. She loved her mama and daddy, her sisters, her nieces and nephews, cousins and other family members, her friends, those in her community and Rosie, her well-dressed little Chihuahua she shared with her sister Janet (who many also called Rosie). Janice lived her whole life in Missouri Valley. In her early adult years, she helped care for her nieces and nephew. Later, for many years, she was a skilled and hardworking boot maker, hand sewing boots for Pendleton boot company. While still working, she took care of her mama the

last 5 years of her mama's life—cooking meals, cleaning the house, doing primary care, and going with her to doctor appointments. Janice lived at home with her parents until they had both passed, then moved to Culavin Heights Apartments where she lived for the last 27 years. For the past few years, Janice was grateful to have Immanuel Pathways, PACE in her life. She knew she was understood both medically and personally by those at PACE. She knew she would not have been able to stay in her own home and remained independent without them. She also would not have lived so well nor so long without their conscientious, compassionate assistance and care. Janice was uniquely Janice. She was a very special person and remarkable gift to our lives. Much loved, she will be dearly missed.

Janice was preceded in death by her father Gilford Stilwell and mother Golda Beck Stilwell, her sisters Joan Gatrost and Janet Victor.

She was survived by her sister Judy Graham of Council Bluffs, her Aunt Mildred Beck of Missouri Valley and many nieces, nephews and cousins.

Visitation will be Friday, February 26 from 4–7 at Hennessey Funeral Chapel in Missouri Valley with funeral service Saturday, February 27 at 11:15, at Hennessey Funeral Home burial at 11:45 at Rose Hill Cemetery.