

Carolyn Payne Sprouse

July 6, 1944 ~ August 6, 2020

Carolyn was born in Charlottesville, Virginia to Russell “Rip” Payne and Josephine E. Payne. She is survived by her husband, Chris A. “Al” Sprouse, sister Jackie Maupin and nephew Jeff Maupin and RJ the poodle.

Carolyn’s dad would have told you; she should have been a boy. As tiny as her stature was, she surpassed any father’s hope for a partner in his life’s work. Rip was an Associated Press photographer, and Carolyn was his pack mule and camera back up, capturing amazing shots from her distinctive vantage point. Jumping out of bed to hike up a steep hill to a plane crash, covering famous politicians’ weddings, on the movie set of Giant with Liz Taylor and Rock Hudson, and wherever the news took the pair.

Carolyn met her lifelong love Chris “Al” Sprouse in Virginia, and they became partners in a life-long adventure, eloping and leaving Virginia to build a life together in Utah. Like most young couples starting out, times were sometimes lean, but they always worked together to get thru the hard stuff and built a dry-cleaning business that has served the community for over four decades. They adventured to many special places and events and built so many wonderful memories. The 2002 Olympics in SLC, the horse parade in Montana, many camping trips, road trips across the country.

After 57 years of marriage, Carolyn left Al behind to continue caring for her herbs and flowers, tomatoes and peppers, birds, bees, and deer. She did not go willingly and fought and won more days than any of us could have asked her for and are grateful for that time.

Carolyn grew to be an amazing force of strength in this world. She was determined, a protector of all creatures great and small, a good cook, a gardener, a skilled photographer, a collector of many treasures, a loving wife and loyal friend.

Carolyn is survived by an amazing extended family, too many to name, because once you came into her home, you became family and never left that circle of love, laughs and stories all held together with her home cooking. Because Al coached high school football at Olympus and Kearns for over 30 years combined, many of the kids that he coached needed something extra in their young lives and they somehow made their way to Al & Carolyn’s door. Carolyn adopted each child as her own and became the anchor and the light to steer their growth as they weathered their personal trials and bloomed into life-long bonds that expanded into three generations of family.

Dear sweet little RJ, beautiful Hima and Lulu will be looking for Carolyn in the coming days as they shadowed her every move. All of us left behind are grateful and heartened that Carolyn will be once again reunited with her Mom and Dad, and the many pets that passed thru her life, deeply loved and cared for, Prissy, Luther, Angus, Keely, Dusty, Pepper, Winston, Maggie, Oscar, Beaux, Shennen and so many other creatures that found their way to Carolyn, as she patched up their hurts and nurtured them and loved them.

You can still see her at every turn of the head and in every corner with her beautiful handwriting, her collections and treasures and peaceful yard refuge for the wildlife.

She was so loved and will be missed by so many whose lives she touched.

A celebration of her life will be held for her. The date, time, and location to be announced. In Lieu of flowers, Carolyn asks that you donate to the Humane Society of Utah.