

Janice Arlene Dearden Tree

December 3, 1933 ~ November 26, 2023

On November 26, 2023, Janice Arlene Dearden Tree, 89, of Sandy, Utah, passed away peacefully with family at her side, just a few days before her 90th birthday.

Janice married Ira J Tree in Salt Lake City, Utah, on December 2, 1955. They had three children – Peggy, Janet, and Evan – whom they reared in Taylorsville, Utah, and then Mesa, Arizona, before returning to Utah later in life. Luckily for Ira, Janice didn't have a school in her small town of Henefer, Utah, so she took the 10-mile bus ride every day to North Summit High School, in Coalville. He eagerly waited for her bus to arrive each day and they quickly fell in love. They dated for three years starting in Janice's sophomore year of high school up until Ira departed for his mission to Tahiti in 1952. Before he left, fearing he would lose her while he was away, Ira gave Janice a promise ring. She wore the ring faithfully, even while Ira extended his mission multiple times to nearly three years, and shortly after his return (but not before she let him know of her disapproval of the extra-long wait!), Janice and Ira were married in the Salt Lake Temple.

Just as missionary service played a big role in their early lives, it would play an even greater role as Janice and Ira entered their twilight years. Together, they served five proselytizing missions in Papeete Tahiti (twice!), The San Tan Indian Reservation, Auckland New Zealand, and Kona Hawaii, as well as a local service mission at the Provo Missionary Training Center. Service and sacrifice for others was woven into every aspect of Janice's life. She was endearingly called "Mama Tree" by the young missionaries, who loved and adored her both during her missions and after – many of them still calling her and visiting her up until her last years. Due to her kind, genuine spirit, her sense of humor, and her gift of listening, she often played the role of mission therapist for the young missionaries, who would come to her to discuss their problems with their companions. When she wasn't offering counsel, she spent much of her time walking throughout the islands offering her cheer and humor along with her delectable baked goods. She felt sincere joy and satisfaction in taking care of the people she loved.

Even in their advanced years, Janice and Ira continued their service, often pushing themselves to their physical limits. At the ages of 75 and 76, they once found themselves living on a remote island in a house with no plumbing and barely survivable living conditions, even for young elders. They stayed in that house, without complaint, for months. Finally, the mission doctor, upon paying them a medical visit and seeing their derelict conditions, ordered them an immediate transfer to a new area. Janice's cheerful disposition and enduring spirit helped keep both her and Ira delightfully engaged in service no matter the circumstances.

Janice, the younger of two children, was born in Henefer, Utah, on December 3, 1933. With much of her family and extended family in the small town, her childhood was filled with happy memories. She loved hanging out at her dad's lunch stand and mercantile store or going to one of her dad's movie theaters in the towns of Morgan or

Coalville. The highlight of her childhood was playing with her dearest friends on her local softball team, famously called the Shmoos. The relationships developed there lasted the test of time, as even decades later the Shmoos sisters continued to meet annually for their ball team party until there were too few left to meet. Though she moved away from Henefer after high school in 1952, one of her favorite things to do each year on Memorial Day until she passed was to visit her old home, see her Dad's lunch stand and store on Main Street, and go to the cemetery on the hill overlooking town and visit her relatives who had passed. It was exciting for her to see which of her old friends, cousins, and neighbors would be there that day and to reminisce on the good ole days.

While Ira was on his first mission, Janice moved to Salt Lake City and took a job in the membership department of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints at the Church Office Building. Later, when the family moved to Mesa, Arizona, in 1979, she took up work with the Church again, this time as a custodian of local church houses and seminary buildings. Always systematic and attentive to detail, she took extreme pride in the quality of the work that she and the rest of her cleaning crew, whom she considered family, did to keep the Lord's houses clean. Her daily highlight during those 17 years was meeting the rest of her crew for lunch at different spots around town.

Janice's passions were spending time with her children and grandchildren, going shopping, taking care of herself, and watching sports with Ira. She was a loyal, strong, and true BYU Cougar fan and loved to watch all the BYU games, in all the sports, by her companion's side and with her "baby" (her pet Shih Tzu) Woofie on her lap. It was common for her son or grandsons to get a call on Saturday afternoons asking where to find the game on TV. While watching the games, she and Woofie both loved to sip on their favorite drink, Dr. Pepper – Janice out of a can and Woofie out of a bowl.

Janice was meticulously clean and organized, an excellent cook, humble, quick-witted, genuine, loyal, warm, and kind with everyone in her life. She found comfort in keeping a detailed daily and weekly routine and enjoyed scheduling her days out for several weeks in advance. Included in her routine was a weekly lunch with family most Fridays at Café Rio, Crown Burger, or Barbacoa, and a monthly appointment to get her nails done with her granddaughters. She was strong in her convictions and remained a faithful member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints throughout her life. She was generous with her time, her energy, and her resources, and she was a friend to all. She will be deeply missed by those that were lucky enough to have met and known her.

Janice was predeceased by her parents Alva and Cecile Dearden and her sister Shirley Wilson. She is survived by her husband Ira Tree, her children Peggy Leatham (Lynn), Janet Barton (Keith), and Evan Tree (Karen), and her 12 grandchildren and 29 great grandchildren.

A viewing will be held Friday December 1, 2023 from 6:00-8:00 pm at Larkin Sunset Gardens located at 1950 E Dimple Dell Drive, Sandy, Utah. The funeral service will be held Saturday December 2, 2023 at 11:00 am at the Crescent Ward Building located at 2195 E Pepperwood Drive, Sandy, Utah. A short viewing will be held prior to the service from 10:00-1045 am.

Those who wish to view the service on-line can click the "Watch Service" button.