Valeen Ripplinger

December 20, 1940 ~ August 3, 2016

Our amazing 75-year-old sister, Valeen Ripplinger, danced her way on August 3, 2016 into the loving arms of her family members on the other side, who have been eagerly waiting for her. She was born in Ogden, Utah, to Nona Hardy and John Henry Ripplinger on December 20, 1940. She was our special sister who had Down's. Valeen might have been the most intelligent and talented of us other eight siblings if not for that exceptionality.

She spent her early years in Ogden and then moved to Salt Lake City for the remainder of her life. When that move was made, she was able to attend the Work Activity Center, where she was a participant for 48 years. She made many friends there and had opportunities to take part in Special Olympics, bowling, ice skating, playing Bocce and growing and achieving in many ways. She enjoyed her job of shredding papers. She danced under the direction of Annie Riordan with the Sunrise Dancers for several years and performed in many places, even traveling by airplane to other states. Her special dance partner was Lowell DeYoung. A picture of Annie and her dancers hangs in Abravanel Hall.

Valeen loved to crochet and made many afghans for others over the years with her perfect stitches. She loved to spend time each summer at the family cabin in Driggs, Idaho, and go over the mountain to attend the Bar J Wranglers performances in Jackson Hole. She traveled with family members to many states and especially enjoyed Hawaii and dancing the hula there. Her favorite food was spaghetti and her favorite dessert was vanilla ice cream with caramel topping. She loved to sneak a soda or chocolate. Her favorite television shows were Bonanza with her friends the Cartwrights, Little House on the Prairie and Lawrence Welk where she sang along out of tune with gusto or danced gracefully to the music. She liked to go to the University of Utah gymnastics meets and the JAZZ was her favorite team. She had an amazing sense of time, direction and memory, especially of people and names.

Val had many health issues but lived a long life, thanks to many good doctors, a fantastic Hospice team and the loving care of her family members. After the death of her mother, she lived in the home of her sister, Diane, for 14 years. Val was preceded in death by her parents and brother, Jay. She is survived by her siblings, Edith Mosier, Donald, Dan (Carole), Jeanette Wilson, Diane Pope, Leon (Coralie) and Mark (Marcia), many nieces, nephews, great-nieces and great-nephews.

There will be a graveside service in the Ogden City Cemetery on Saturday, August 6, at 10:00 a.m. In lieu of flowers, please send donations to the Work Activity Center 1275 West 2320 South, Salt Lake City, UT 84119