

Tirza Sidonie Riedel Stratford

April 10, 1935 ~ March 5, 2024

In the early morning hours of March 5, 2024, just before the sun rose over the mountains, Tirza Sidonie Riedel Stratford ended her mortal journey and reunited with her dear husband, beloved relatives, and friends. Born April 10, 1935 to a family with a proud German heritage, Tirza gained an appreciation of education, culture, traditions, and people, driving her outgoing, inquisitive, and adventurous personality. She and her husband, Charles (Chic) Stratford, were sealed on September 9, 1955 in the Salt Lake Temple. Tirza adored her husband and he adored her. Their marriage was a lifelong love story. Together, they raised and loved 11 children.

Managing a household with 11 children was one of Tirza ’s greatest accomplishments. She had an incredible talent for feeding such a large family and was often praised for her culinary expertise. Tirza crafted healthy, economical, and delicious meals, teaching many people how to store and use their food storage. She dedicated her life and talents to her family.

She loved to waterski and skied until she was 70 years old. She swam, did water aerobics, and made healthy foods to stay fit. She had a talent for gardening, oil painting, and playing the piano. There were many traditions that the family all enjoyed. This included boating, long trips in the camper, and a German party every Christmas to remember her German heritage. As a grandma she loved giving Care Bears to her grandkids. She used her sewing talent to make many of the Care Bears. She is known as the Care Bear Grandma.

Her positive outlook brightened many lives. She listened, provided comfort, and security to many. She had a way of connecting with people. Tirza loved to write notes to others acknowledging things she appreciated about them, wishing them a happy birthday, or just letting them know she loved them. She was always active in the neighborhood and community, including active participation in the Rotary Ann Club.

Among her many experiences, Tirza traveled the world with her husband, exploring the United States, Europe, South America, and South Pacific. Although she called Salt Lake home, she lived in Texas with Chic while he served in the United States Air Force. With him by her side, they served a Spanish speaking mission to Boston, MA for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Throughout her life, Tirza valued hard work, knowledge, and literature. Those she loved often anticipated the gift of a personally chosen book. She spent long nights reading each book to ensure the recipient received the perfect book. With her expert knowledge of child development and with her wide range of personal experiences, it was not surprising that Tirza spent years teaching pre-kindergarten, positively influencing many young lives.

Family and friends will never forget her strength in overcoming challenges, her determination, and her service to others. The origins of her name depict beauty and delight. Surely, Tirza was goodness personified. She lived a life of incredible faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Tirza taught her children by example, the principles of charity and

kindness.

Tirza was proceeded in death by her parents, Emma Anna Louise Böhnke Riedel and Albert Richard Riedel, her husband Charles H. Stratford, her grand-daughters Catherine Sidonie Tucker and Catelyn JoAnne Warr, and sister Sandee Turner. She is survived by her 11 children and spouses: Charles Kerry (Katherine) Stratford, Lawrence (Nadine) Stratford, Lisa (Terry) Tucker, Laurie (Mark) Featherstone, Christopher (Katrina) Stratford, Tamara (Craig) Warr, Jeffrey (Sue) Stratford, Timothy (Jana) Stratford, Jennifer (Mike) Jensen, Jill (CJ) Waldron, and Tara (Jason) Fairbanks. She has 59 grandchildren (with spouses), 42 great-grandchildren (with spouses), and 2 great-great-grandchildren. Her posterity is 125 and still growing. She is also survived by sisters Angela Walz and Virgina (Rick) Hildebrandt, brother Mike (Sharon) Riedel, and brother in law Roger Turner.

Viewing will be held on Wednesday March 13, 2024 from 6:30 - 8:30 PM and March 14, 2024 from 11 AM -12 PM. Funeral service to follow at 12:30 PM. All services will be at the Crestview Ward: 2795 E. Crestview Drive Salt Lake City, UT 84108. Interment following at Wasatch Lawn Memorial Park.

We wish to thank the many caregivers, who have provided loving care to our mother. We would also like to thank Rachel RN, and the team from Quality Hospice.