



## Elene I. DePass

July 5, 1932 - May 4, 2020

Elene Irma DePass, 87, passed away peacefully on Monday, May 4, 2020 at the Crofton Care and Rehabilitation Center in Howard County, Maryland.

She was born on July 5, 1932 in Harlem, New York, the third child of Barbados native Seymour Herman Bailey and Clarice Alberta Bowen Bailey of Guyana. Elene grew up in a loving Brooklyn home with her parents, five sisters, two brothers, and cousins who lived next door. Described by her school peers as “a sweet girl,” she graduated from Sarah J. Hale Vocational High School with honors in 1951. Elene loved to roller skate, go to the movies, sew, and spend time with her family. She took a job as a seamstress at a local dress shop while earning a fashion and photography modeling certificate from the Grace Del Marco Modeling Agency in New York City.

On June 6, 1953, she married Juan Arthur DePass of Brooklyn in a stunning wedding dress she designed and made with the help of her sisters. They had two sons Victor Michael DePass and Gregory Wayne DePass, and a daughter Joyce Ellen DePass. After raising three children in their Glen Cove Long Island home, Elene returned to work as a seamstress for the International Association of Garment Workers where she was employed for many years. Elene enjoyed working with textiles both on and off the job. In addition to sewing many of her own clothes, she made outfits for her daughter and her daughter’s baby dolls. She also knitted hats and scarves, crocheted blankets

and throws, and dabbled in a little needlepoint.

With a warm heart and gentle bedside manner, she cared for loved ones in need. A new baby, an accident, an illness, no matter what, she was ready to lend a helping hand at a moment's notice. In 1980 Elene earned her nurses aid certificate and a job at Glen Cove Hospital in New York. Next to raising her children, she considered this one of her greatest accomplishments.

Following their retirement to the west coast of Florida in 1991, Elene found a new passion. From a small studio situated on the lanai of their Punta Gorda home, Elene began sculpting stained glass. She spent countless hours designing, selecting, cutting, and soldering the glass into the most beautiful hand-crafted ornaments, mirrors, lamps, jewelry boxes, wall hangings, and more to give away to family and friends. While her signature item included a collection of stained glass angels, she created one of her most ambitious pieces for her daughter's wedding in 1992. It was a stunning stained glass gazebo that sat between the layers of the wedding cake, along with a heart-shaped glass topper with two white glass doves. Elene also enjoyed making pottery, crafts, and had an amazing green thumb. She enjoyed engagements with the ladies of the Red Hat Society and could often be found riding around the community in her flower-adorned golf cart. She loved children and while she had no grandchildren of her own, she cherished the summers when Arianne and Ashley Mumford came to visit. A devout Catholic, Elene attended church regularly and became a Eucharistic minister while in Florida.

Elene relocated to Maryland in 2012 following the death of her husband. An assisted living facility put her closer to her daughter and family in Maryland and New York, and kept her days filled with activities, entertainment, and the opportunity to make new friends. She enjoyed tea parties, movies, cookouts, and BINGO. She was gentle, kind, and nurturing with the other residents, assisting with crafts, reading, and helping them find their rooms after meals,

even when she could not find her own.

More than thirty-five years ago, while suffering a devastating cerebral aneurysm, Elene dreamed of flying to heaven on the back of a white winged horse. As real as the dream appeared to her, it was not then her time to go. The pegasus became a symbol of hope and strength throughout the remainder of her life. She immortalized her beloved pegasus in stained glass, one of her most impressive pieces. She collected pegasus pictures, figurines, jewelry, and more. And for when she was ready, a plush stuffed white pegasus waited patiently at her bedside during her final days.

Elene is survived by her son Victor DePass and daughter Joyce DePass, sisters Barbara Seymour, Shirley Bailey, Yvonne Zabriskie, and brother Richard Bailey, and a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, and extended family members and friends. She is preceded in death by her husband Juan DePass, son Gregory DePass, father Seymour Bailey, mother Clarice Bailey, sisters Lorraine Reape and Evelyn Edmund, and brother Roland Bailey.

Details on an early Fall Memorial Service and Celebration of Life will be forthcoming.