

Homegoing Service
Celebrating the Life of



Arizona Van Valen

Sunrise
August 2, 1929

"Fi Fi"

Sunset
September 19, 2012

Service
Thursday, September 27, 2012 ~ 10:00 a.m.

Woody "Home For Services"

163 Oakwood Avenue
Orange, New Jersey

Rev. Ernest Conner, Jr., Officiating

Life Reflections

Arizona Van Valen (nee Conner) (affectionately known as “FiFi”) was the ninth of ten children born to George and Arizona Conner (nee Bland). Fifi was born in Roselle, New Jersey in 1929 on the eve of the great depression. When she was just a few years old Fifi lost her mother and was raised by her father and older sisters who banded together to get through the hard times. She learned cooking and sewing at a very young age and was naturally talented at both. She attended Abraham Clark High School where she excelled and went on to graduate in the top 10 percentile of her class. While still in her late teens, Fifi made her contribution to the WWII war effort in the tradition of “Rosie the Riveter” by working as a Seamstress making shoulder pads for the service men’s uniforms.

Fifi grew into a beautiful woman – inside and out. She was quite a looker and had both a smile and a laugh that lit up a room. When she laughed everyone laughed; it was so contagious – and she could really shake a tail-feather. She and her siblings enjoyed going to the Adams and the other theaters to see all of the greats. Fifi was also a huge movie buff and hardly ever missed a feature. Education and information proved to be very important to Fifi. She was always well-informed – reading 3 newspapers daily.

Fifi met, fell in love with and married Joseph Van Valen (affectionately known as “Sonny”) with whom she shared the next fifty-nine years. They briefly resided in Roselle, New Jersey then ultimately settled in East Orange, New Jersey. Their union was blessed with four loving children, Joseph Ralph Jr., Catherine Cecelia, Vicci and Richard Louis.

Fifi was a stay at home mom for many years while her children were young. She was very serious about their education and taught all four of her children to read before they attended kindergarten. She also practiced “It takes a village” and hers was the neighborhood house where she looked after all the children on the block. Everyone knew Ms. Fifi and all the parents knew they could send their children to play in her yard with no worries.

She was a loving wife – and would often tell her husband whom she endearingly called Big Joe, “You may be the head of the family, but I’m the neck – and you know the head can’t turn without the neck!”

When the children grew older, Sonny and Fifi bought a house. Fifi ventured back into the workforce, securing a position with her sister Pearl Carter at Harris Linen, where she worked her way up to head seamstress. Fifi had a strong work ethic, through rain, sleet or snow...never missing a day in over twenty years until she retired. In her retirement she was a dedicated grandma – Nanny to all her grandchildren. She had a special relationship with each one. She would always take the time to be their Nanny - to play, tell stories, pull teeth, wipe tears and listen to hopes and dreams. She was always comforting, encouraging and loving.

Arizona Van Valen was the baby girl and the last of her generation. She lived a long beautiful life that touched all who knew her. Fifi was pre-deceased by brothers Otis, Paul, Henry (Chip), and Ernest Conner; and sisters, Georgia Conner, Eleanor Fair, Alzora (Dooda) Jones, Pauline (Pearl) Carter, and Bernice Conner. She is loved dearly and will be deeply missed by her loving family: children, Joseph Jr., Catherine, Vicci and Richard Van Valen; grandchildren, Camille, David-Joseph, Victor, Joseph R. III, David Ashley, Richard L. Jr., Tina E. and Ashley A. Van Valen.

Lovingly and sorrowfully submitted,
The Family

Order Of Service

PROCESSIONAL

HYMN OF COMFORT
“How Great Thou Art”

OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURE
Thessalonians 4:13-18

NEW TESTAMENT SCRIPTURE
John 14: 1-7

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF CONDOLENCES

OBITUARY

MUSIC
“Just A Closer Walk With Thee”

EULOGY
Rev. Ernest Conner, Jr., Officiating

BENEDICTION

RECESSIONAL

Interment

Brig. Gen. William C. Doyle Veterans Memorial Cemetery
Wrightstown, New Jersey

Services Entrusted To:

G.G. Woody Funeral Home, LLC
206 East Eighth Avenue • Roselle, NJ 07203
www.ggwoodyfuneralhome.com

“Where Our Sympathy Expresses Itself Through Sincere Service”



Pall Bearers
Family of Arizona Van Valen



TO THOSE I LOVE & THOSE WHO LOVE ME

When I am gone, release me, let me go
I have so many things to see and do
You mustn't tie yourself to me with tears
Be happy that we had so many years.

I gave you my love, you can only guess
How much you gave me in happiness
I thank you for the love you each have shown,
But now it's time I traveled alone.

So grieve for me if grieve you must,
Then let your grief be comforted by trust.
It's only for a while that we must part,
So bless the memories within your heart.

I won't be far away, for life goes on,
So if you need me call and I will come
Though you can't see or touch me, I'll be near
And if you listen with your heart, you'll hear
All of my love around you, soft and clear.

And then when you must come this way alone,
I'll greet you with a smile and say "Welcome Home."

Acknowledgement

The family of **Arizona Van Valen** acknowledges with sincere appreciation every thought and act of kindness expressed to us during this our hour of bereavement. We will always keep you in our prayers. May God continue to richly bless you.

