



Sylvia Kroger Willenbrink

June 3, 1943 - April 29, 2025

Sylvia Kroger Willenbrink, formerly of Cincinnati, Ohio, and most recently of Sarasota, Florida, passed away on April 29, 2025, at the age of 81, following surgery for lung cancer, at Sarasota Memorial hospital.

Born on June 3, 1943, Sylvia was the beloved daughter of Bernard and Sylvia Kroger. Sylvia graduated high school from the Academy Notre Dame Providence, New Port Kentucky, and attended St. Joseph Convent in Kentucky, for a few years, and went on to build a fulfilling career in the financial industry. Sylvia began her professional life at Fifth Third Union Trust Company - now Fifth Third Bank - in Cincinnati, Ohio. Later she joined Cintel Federal Credit Union - now Connexus Credit Union, where she worked for many years till her retirement. She worked hard, meticulously and with dedication.

Sylvia also enjoyed seasonal work at the iconic Kentucky Derby at Churchill Downs in Louisville, Kentucky, where she was responsible for handling funds in the money room- an experience she held dear.

Sylvia had a love of traveling, to places like Japan, Greece, Hawaii, Hong Kong, and the Bahamas where she collected photos of her beautiful experiences.

After retiring to Sarasota, Florida, Sylvia met Andrew "Andy" Ashley and quickly became a vital part of his family. Following his divorce, Andy was raising his infant daughter, Ava, and Sylvia stepped in with love and dedication. She not only served as Andy's accountant for his landscaping business but also became a daily presence in Ava's life - driving her to school, sports practices, dance lessons, and medical appointments. Sylvia embraced her role as a grandmother figure to both Ava, and Andy's eldest daughter, Mandy, who lived with him during summer visitation. Her devotion and presence helped shape their lives with care and stability.

Sylvia is survived by her nephew, Steven Strohmaier of Cincinnati, Ohio.

She is also remembered with deep affection by her many close friends.

Cherished by friends in Cincinnati include Jack and Janie Davis, Hannah Armstrong and Kathryn Jones. In Sarasota, Sylvia's close friends' and companions included Andrew Ashley, Mandy Ashley, and Ava Ashley, Shirley Lane, Diann and Mica Minero - who warmly hosted Sylvia for many cherished Italian holiday dinners - Karyn Bottomley, Linda and Alan Kessler, Beth Cowart, and all of her friends and neighbors at the Palm Aire community.

Sylvia will be remembered for her unwavering kindness, strength, and the quiet grace with which she supported those she loved. Her legacy lives on in the many lives she touched - through her family, her close friends, and the vibrant community she built around her.

A memorial will be held, that date is to be determined. The contact for that will be Mandy Ashley, you may contact at Mandya1293@gmail.com. We ask at this time, if you have special photos you'd like shared at the memorial of Sylvia, please contact the email listed above.

Tribute Wall

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“ to my only Aunt and God Mother who left her family here in Kentucky so many years ago. So sad to here of her obituary so late on 10/27/25. Wish we could have gave you comfort on your final days, but I will always remember you in my Heart. I hope you and my Dad find each other in Heaven.

Bonita - October 27, 2025 at 03:46 PM

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“ Sylvia and I were acquainted for many years as neighbors in Sarasota. She was helpful, kind, so smart. I'm shocked and sorry at her passing.

Susan Saridakis - June 04, 2025 at 03:15 PM