



Jewell Bernice Wuntch Zimmerman

October 21, 1920 - June 3, 2020

Jewell Bernice Wuntch Zimmerman was the strongest person her daughters and grandchildren will ever know. She passed away peacefully on June 3, 2020, the year in which she would have turned 100 years old. Jewell was born in Tyler, Texas on October 21, 1920 to Samuel Wuntch and Norma Solinger Wuntch, later Norma Golden. As soon as she was able, Jewell added an "l" to her given, more common birth name of "Jewel". She wanted to distinguish herself, to be unique. And that she was. From an early age, Jewell wanted to be an artist. Her talent showed early and was immense. But life interfered and Mom's dreams of attending the Chicago Art Institute were quashed. That didn't stop her. Through the years she created beautiful oil and watercolor paintings that her children and grandchildren proudly display in their homes. She entered and won awards in art shows through the years. Jewell moved to Houston after high school to continue her life. She lived in the YWCA at first and made many life long friends. She eventually lived with the family of one of her friends until she met and married a handsome enlisted man with a twinkle in his eye for her, Isaac Zimmerman. Isaac and Jewell married on March 30th, 1947 and were married for 56 years, until Isaac's death. Jewell was a driven, smart, and accomplished professional woman long before most women thought they could have that role. She had both the mind of a business person and the spirit of an artist, a powerful combination. Jewell worked her way up in the insurance industry, holding the highest agency positions that women could attain at the time, and became indispensable to the success of the companies

she was a part of. She worked until she retired in her 50's. After that, she immediately took up in earnest her long standing avocation of playing mahjong with friends and became a teacher, teaching her love of the game to newcomers at the Jewish Community Center for years. Jewell and Isaac began their family with their daughter Marsha in 1951 and then welcomed Jill in 1955. Jewell was the undisputed boss of the home, and always made sure Marsha and Jill were well cared for. As her daughters grew, Jewell provided a role model for them to know that they could achieve whatever they set their minds to in life. She celebrated their victories in life but also taught them not to fear failure. Mom worked hard, alongside our Dad, outside the home to provide for her family. The love and true partnership that was shared by Jewell and Isaac showed us what to aspire to for ourselves. Mom always found time to introduce Marsha and Jill to her passions. Art, of course. Many hours were spent at the art museum and listening to Mom recount the lives and special techniques of the great art Masters. But she also introduced her girls to the wonders of the library, fostering a lifelong love in Jill that led to Jill's career as a librarian and a tenured professor in library science. Jewell equally loved the theatre and the ballet and instilled a passion for music in both her children that has provided a thread of comfort throughout their lives in good times and bad. Were it not for Jewell's insistent desire to share her loves in life, Marsha would not have been introduced to the Alvin Ailey Dance Company, to Rudolph Nureyev, or to Mikhail Baryshnikov, all of whom she saw perform, with Jewell by her side. Mom loved Houston and it's cultural events. She would pretend with Jill that they were tourists in Houston, the city she loved, seeing the attractions on 'vacation'. Mom loved holiday celebrations, especially holidays with decorations that showed her boundless artistry and brightened the room while we ate delicious foods. Jill and Marsha

marvel now to think of the values she placed on the hours she spent introducing them to culture, holidays, and Houston. We realized as adults that as a working mother, time and money were precious commodities for Mom.

Jewell is survived by her daughters Marsha Gerber and Jill Zimmerman, her son-in-law Sid Gerber, her daughter-in-law Lucy Duncan, her granddaughters Julie Rosenbluth (David) and Amy Gerber (Eric Black), her great grandchildren Annabelle and Ellie Rosenbluth and Alexis and Isaac Black, numerous first cousins that she delighted in, and many loving nieces and nephews. She is predeceased by her brother Israel William Wuntch. Jewell loved life. She enjoyed and held on to it for 11 years, under the care of Seven Acres Jewish Senior Care Services. We are grateful to the entire Seven Acres organization for the professional, quality, respectful, and loving care she received. We are also grateful for the extraordinary kindnesses and professional services our Mom received from Vitas hospice care for 2 1/2 years, including Debbie and Rosalind. Our words are not sufficient to express our gratitude to both Seven Acres and Vitas. Mom was a force unto herself and there seems to be a little less energy in the world with her gone. Donations in Jewell's memory can be made if desired to Seven Acres, the Houston Food Bank, or the Houston Area Women's Center.