



## Leah Granoff Nitishin

September 20, 1933 - August 6, 2023

Leah (Granoff) Nitishin, 89 years & 10 months young, passed into Angel's arms on August 6, 2023, surrounded by her children. Leah was married to Arnold Nitishin, her best friend and life-long mate, her Darling and Sweetheart, for 66 years and 10 months! Arnold preceded her in leaving this earthly plane when he moved on June 2, 2020.

Now they dance together forever!!

Leah was born and raised in a small South Texas town and grew up living an adventurous and vivacious life. She began exploring the world as a child with her parents and brothers, road-tripping by car across the USA and Mexico and by ship and plane to Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East. As an adult, she continued returning to Mexico many times as well as venturing far and wide to Alaska, Australia, Bermuda, Canada, Cayman Islands, Europe, Israel, New Zealand, Puerto Rico, and the US Virgin Islands of St. John and St. Thomas.

Growing up, Mom was the Head Drum Majorette excelling in her baton twirling and high kicking abilities as well as being the Queen of the Junior-Senior Prom of her High School. Her love for the piano blossomed after her father had a new piano shipped from Chicago to South Texas in 1938 by train. She became an accomplished pianist and kept that piano her entire life until she

gave it to her only granddaughter in 2017. After high school, Leah graduated from Stephens College and then went on to attend the University of Texas at Austin. Her academic life was put on hold when she married the Love of Her Life, Arnold Nitishin, and began raising their four children as her husband furthered his medical profession.

After a twenty-year academic hiatus, Leah went back to university life attending the University of Houston—first graduating Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Science Degree and then continuing her education and graduating with a Master's in Speech Pathology. After further dedication and hard work, Leah earned the highest standard of excellence in her chosen field of Speech Pathology, the ASHA Certificate of Clinical Competence.

Throughout her professional career, Leah worked in several different areas; she began in the Public School System, then moved into Private Practice and finished her career working in Skilled Nursing and Rehabilitation Facilities and Nursing homes. While in the School System, she became an expert in helping children with learning disabilities like Dyslexia. She then opened her own Private Practice and focused on learning disabilities and stroke recovery; the latter being what would become her true passion. After many years she closed her Private Practice and began focusing her entire energy on helping Seniors recover their lost ability to swallow & speak following a stroke.

While other Therapists would spend little time with the severely impaired patients, Leah would seek them out. Her greatest personal reward, although challenging, was helping those patients who were being ignored and left behind by the System. At all times she was the Light of hope who looked after all the patients who could no longer advocate for themselves. She routinely worked until 9 PM at night when her shift ended at 5 PM. Her tireless dedication to helping the forgotten became her mission. Although the great majority of her fellow Therapists and Nurses did not share her extreme ethic

to work, they did respect her dedication and desire to genuinely help others who were in need.

Following her retirement, she continued to stay active volunteering first with The Houston Food Bank and Dress for Success. Eventually, she volunteered for many years at the Emergency Aid Coalition where her ability to speak Spanish was very appreciated.

At age 68, Mom began regularly working out with a Personal Trainer in the gym and additionally became an avid long-distance walker. She used to enjoy doing laps around Memorial Park for hours while training on her own for the Half Marathons. She completed 9 Half Marathons, finishing her first Half Marathon at age 70 in 2003 and her last one at age 79 in 2012. Just like the Energizer Bunny, Mom always wore Pink (to raise awareness for Cancer) and finished all her Half Marathons at a 16-minute per-mile pace!

All of this was done while stoically facing the hardest challenge of her life: being diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease in 2005. Although her Parkinson's Disease continued to progress, she met the challenge head-on every day – day in and day out. Mom fought like a WARRIOR and exemplified the credo – Never Give Up. She never gave in. She always tried to make the day about someone else. “Pay it Forward”, she taught us. “Be independent in your thinking”. “Be righteous in your honesty.” “Be sincere and genuine in your loving.” “Always stand up for what is Right and advocate for the Underdog.”

For all your life lessons and all the lives you have touched; we honor you for being the Light who shined so brightly.

It is interesting to note that our Dad was 4 years older than our Mom and he grew up in the same small South Texas town around her older brothers and

her family. He literally knew the person that would become his future wife her ENTIRE LIFE. We have a picture showing Mom at age 6 standing first in a line-up of some of the gang of older boys who ran the neighborhood (a la The Little Rascals.). The picture from 1939 is big enough to have captured 6 of the neighborhood boys standing in line behind our Mom – with each boy holding on to the boy in front of him – and the boy first in line holding on to our Mom—is our Dad at age 10.

Even at this young age Leah & Arnold had a special connection.

Leah G. Nitishin was laid to eternal rest next to her best friend and life-long mate, her Darling and Sweetheart Arnold Nitishin, on August 09, 2023.

Together forever they continue to Dance.

Leah G. Nitishin is survived by her 4 children, 2 sons-in-law, 6 grandchildren and their spouses, and 16 great-grandchildren.

Please make Donations in her Memory to: Emergency Aid Coalition in Houston, Houston Area Parkinson's Society (HAPS), and the Michael J. Fox Foundation.

# Cemetery Details

## **Emanu El Memorial Park**

8341 Bissonnet St  
Houston, TX 77074