



Rita Jeane Fitzgerald

August 4, 1931 - December 31, 2016

Rita Jeane Smail Fitzgerald, 85, Topeka, passed away on December 31, 2016.

Rita was born August 4, 1931, in Topeka, the eldest child of Loyal C. and Dorothy E. Hodgson Smail. She graduated from Topeka High School in 1949. Rita was married to Leslie Theodore Fitzgerald on January 29, 1955, and later divorced in 1980. They raised four boys, Scott, David, Gary and John.

Rita was a Vanda Beauty Counselor from 1966 to 1974 and became a top seller, winning many awards. She started working for the City of Topeka in 1975, as a police dispatcher and retired after 18 years in 1993. Later she dispatched for Washburn University Security from 1996-2000. Rita was a member of the Fraternal Order of Police.

Rita was a wonderful lady; she loved her family and spoiled her grandchildren. She deeply cared for “her guys”, the officers of the Topeka Police Department and Washburn University. Rita enjoyed traveling to Hawaii, all over Europe and many other places. Everywhere she went, she visited the capital and collected patches from state and local police departments. Rita’s collection was on display at the Topeka Police Department for many years. Rita will be greatly missed by her family and friends.

Rita is survived by her sons, John (Angel) of Topeka, and David (Debbie) of Texas; grandchildren, Robyn Fitzgerald, Stefani Moore (Andrew), Carly Fitzgerald, Johnny Fitzgerald, and Jessica Fitzgerald; and great-granddaughter, Paige Ann Moore; and sister, Norma Robbins of Texas. She is preceded in death by her parents, her ex-husband Ted Fitzgerald, and sons, Scott and Gary.

Rita's memorial service will be 1 p.m. Monday, January 9th at Kevin Brennan Family Funeral Home, 2801 SW Urish Rd, Topeka, KS 66614. Inurnment will be private and at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the family, for a tree to be planted in her memory.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

JAN 9. 1:00 PM (CT)

Kevin Brennan Family Funeral Home
2801 SW Urish Road
Topeka, KS 66614
(785) 272-7888
info@kevinbrennanfamily.com

Tribute Wall



“ *Rita Jeane Fitzgerald*

January 28, 2023 at 12:08 PM



“ *Rita was a great TPD dispatcher. Many years ago, Freq 2 was warrant/info on subjects that have been stopped or involved in some situation. Rita was very good in sending you a back officer, when she saw that this particular subject may need to be arrested, way before you asked for a back. She was amazing. Rita looked out for us Police Officers on the streets. I was Blessed. Rita was Blessed.*

Rebecca Schiefelbein - January 09, 2017 at 02:57 PM



“ *You were always glad to hear when Rita was working your side of town and she knew what every officer was doing. She used to ride with me now and then on 2nd shift and it made the shift fly by. Rita used to call me her Sugar Bear and after she retired she would stop in to Dillons where I worked part time to visit. I miss those days. RIP Rita.*

Kirby Lester (Sugar Bear)

Kirby Lester - January 08, 2017 at 07:50 PM



“ *Rita & I worked together at dispatch. She was Rita F & I was Rita T. She was a great lady & a great friend. We hung out a lot back then. I can still hear her laugh. I will miss her very much!!! My condolences to her family. I will keep you all in my prayers. Rita Torrez*

Rita Torrez - January 08, 2017 at 07:15 PM

JH

“*Leroy was so right. Rita was loved by the officers she served with for so many years. I will never forget the patch display that she had made for us! I kept in touch with her over the years and saw her often at Walgreen's where we visited for hours forgetting what time it was. She was a dear sweet person who was always concerned with how you were doing and what she could do to help! I loved her dearly and am so sorry for your loss! Godspeed Rita! Heaven has gained a very special angel! Watch over your men and women in blue, we will see you again!*”

Julie Hoffman - January 08, 2017 at 03:33 PM

LR

“*All of us officers loved Rita. She was one of the best dispatchers we had. Every officer agreed that Rita was the one to have on the console when the stuff hit the fan because she was real calm and always tried to keep one step ahead of the officers because she knew what we needed even before we asked. I miss those days having Rita around as many other officers will. Rest In Peace Rita !*”



Leroy Rice

LeRoy Rice - January 05, 2017 at 03:51 PM

MP

“*Always a smile and encouragement from Rita. We knew how much you cared. Fondest memories,Mark Pheasant*”

mark pheasant - January 05, 2017 at 09:03 AM