



Antonia Burgos

December 22, 1927 - January 27, 2017

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Antonia “Bita” Burgos Antonia Burgos, affectionately known by her close friends and family as “Bita,” passed away peacefully at the Bailey Family Center for Caring on Friday, January 27, after a short illness. Her daughter and son-in-law, Grace and Tony laquinto, held her hands as the music of Toña la Negra, one of her favorites, played. Born in the Dominican Republic in 1927, Bita had 10 siblings. Her parents died young, and she was raised by her grandmother on a small farm in Moca and by her uncle in the capitol city of Santo Domingo. At 18, she moved to the Upper West Side of Manhattan as a nanny for a family her uncle knew from the Dominican Republic. She later met and married Manuel Carmenate of Camaguey, Cuba and moved to Brooklyn, NY, where they had their only child, Grace. She became a strong, single mother who worked as a hairdresser to support herself and her daughter and while their lifestyle was very modest, she took every opportunity to share with Grace the wonders of New York’s opera, dance and theater world. Bita loved to travel, and took her young daughter to Spain and Morocco. After her daughter grew up, Bita was an active member of the Caribbean Lions’ Club and travelled whenever she could. In 1990, she moved to Palm Coast to live with Grace, Tony and their daughter Olivia. She helped raise Olivia and her younger sister Sofia while their parents were at work. She also took up driving again after a 25-year hiatus and zipped all over in her little Ford Festiva. The

family moved to St. Augustine in 1993, where Bita was as active as ever. She volunteered for many years at the Council on Aging and benefitted from many of their services herself in later years. She loved to ride the Sunshine Bus, and often could be spotted at the Anastasia Publix — shopping, enjoying a cup of coffee and visiting with the “sample ladies.” She made friends all over town, who always remembered Antonia even after she could no longer make her rounds. Bita not only enjoyed her friends, but was beloved by the friends of Grace and Tony and Olivia and Sofia. She spent many evenings in the middle of a group of younger folks, chiming in with her words of wit and wisdom. Until very recently, she’d accompany her family on nights out to visit friends and enjoy a glass of wine. Those evenings, and many others, will be far less engaging without Bita. A woman of spark, style and spunk all her life, Bita loved her family and as immensely proud of her granddaughters. They all in turn loved and cared for her with devotion, patience and humor. Antonia is survived by her daughter and son-in-law, Grace and Tony laquinto, her granddaughters, Olivia and Sofia laquinto and the family’s pets, Bocce and Icarus the cats and Isis the Dog. The family thanks Bita’s caregivers, Cynthia, Faye, Julia, Lorna and Tunekia, who helped her live a good life at home with everyone she loved, the Council On Aging, who gave her a sense of community. Thanks also to Community Hospice for the gentle care during her last few days, and to friends and co-workers of Grace and Tony who reached out in support. Instead of flowers, contributions are welcome in memory of Antonia “Bita” Burgos to the Council on Aging, 180 Marine St., St. Augustine, FL 32084. A celebration of Bita’s life will be held at the COA on Saturday, Feb. 4 at 4PM. In Bita’s famous words, “She fine.” St. John’s Family Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

Tribute Wall

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“ *Bita was an amazing woman. A beautiful tribute. She was so loved!
She will truly be missed. My heart pours out to you in your sorrow.*

Aldona Dante - February 02, 2017 at 12:00 AM