



Irene G. Benfatti

July 9, 1948 - March 30, 2025

Irene Benfatti, age 76, passed away peacefully in her home on March 30, 2025, surrounded by her husband, Vincent, daughter, Tania, and two granddaughters, Marina and Sofia. Irene was born in Caracas, Venezuela and grew up in Paterson, New Jersey, where she attended Eastside High School and then William Paterson College. A natural-born leader, Irene channeled her love for fashion into her extracurriculars by organizing runway shows and other events for Canadians department store, where she worked as a student. Irene also modeled for popular brands like Bobbie Brooks and Johnathon Logan in New York.

After her graduation Irene took her strong sense for leadership into a lifelong career dedicated to education. Irene proudly served as the Superintendent of Schools in New Jersey for many years. She was a staunch advocate for every child's right to a fair and equitable education - a belief she supported throughout her entire career, both in the classroom as a teacher and as an administrator. Driven by a continual desire to grow and learn, Irene later earned an advanced degree from Columbia University, furthering her commitment to making a difference in the lives of students. Her legacy of love, compassion, and advocacy for education will continue to inspire all those who knew her.

Irene was a superintendent not only in education, but also in life. Irene loved

spending time with her family, always planning their next great adventure together, whether it included travelling, restaurant discoveries, or simply relaxing at the beach. Irene played an active role in the lives of her husband, daughter and two grandchildren. She paid close attention to those around her and actively sought out unique opportunities to make memories with her loved ones. Whether that be through reading mystery novels to her oldest granddaughter during summer breaks or planning an enriching home-school curriculum filled with field trips for her youngest granddaughter – she made all of those around her feel seen and special. Notably, she entertained her husband's love for animals by supporting him in raising canaries and runner ducks in addition to a variety of other animal companions. She was also a partner in crime to her loving daughter, Tania, as they shared a special bond through their fierce loyalty and love for family. Irene's warmth, intelligence, and unwavering dedication to her family and her work left a lasting impression on everyone who had the pleasure of knowing her. Irene will be deeply missed by all who loved her.

Irene Benfatti's life will be celebrated with a funeral service on Friday April 4th, 2025, at 12:00 pm at St. Paul's Orthodox Church in Naples, Florida, visitation starting at 11:00 am. Entombment will follow at Palm Royale Cemetery.

To sign her guest register or to leave online condolences please visit www.ShikanyFuneralHome.com.

Arrangements are being handled by Shikany's Bonita Funeral Home Family Owned and Operated Since 1978.

Cemetery Details

Palm Royale Cemetery

6780 Vanderbilt Beach Road
Naples, FL 34119

Previous Events

Visitation

APR 4. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

St. Paul Antiochian Orthodox Church
2425 Rivers Road
Naples, FL 34120

Funeral Service

APR 4. 12:00 PM (ET)

St. Paul Antiochian Orthodox Church
2425 Rivers Road
Naples, FL 34120

Entombment

APR 4. 1:15 PM (ET)

Palm Royale Cemetery
6780 Vanderbilt Beach Road
Naples, FL 34119

Tribute Wall

CP

“ I never knew Irene personally but we attended Eastside High School together 1962-66. She was a flag twirler and looked great in her uniform. I always thought she was amazingly beautiful. Even though someone else won the title of best looking (it's all about popularity and who voted anyway), I always thought she should have had the title. It sounds like she had a good life and that's all someone could ask for. Rest in Peace, Irene. You are remembered.



Celeste Parcell - October 01, 2025 at 10:55 AM

CT

“ Dear Vince and Tania, I am so sad to hear of the loss of dear Irene. She was an amazing person who encouraged me to run for the board of education in Riverdale, of which I stayed for 16 years. She brought the Riverdale School so far in her time as Superintendent. Her motivation for quality education for children was always about giving students the best opportunities to thrive, she never faltered in her commitment to what was right for education. I know how much she loved her family and she will be dearly missed by you all. Please know that her impact on me will remain throughout my lifetime - I can still hear her positive and upbeat tone. My deepest sympathy. Colleen Tambuscio

Colleen Tambuscio - April 04, 2025 at 11:21 AM

YF

“ your sister, Elaine, Bruce and family purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of Irene G. Benfatti.



your sister, Elaine, Bruce and family - April 03, 2025 at 07:48 PM

YF

“ your sister, Elaine, Bruce and family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Irene G. Benfatti.

your sister, Elaine, Bruce and family - April 03, 2025 at 07:48 PM

MS

“ Maryann smith purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Irene G. Benfatti.



Maryann smith - April 03, 2025 at 02:23 PM

MS

“ Maryann smith planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Irene G. Benfatti.

Maryann smith - April 03, 2025 at 02:23 PM

TC

“ We spent many days in the Bahamas with Irene. Her love for her family was always present in her words and in her deeds. We have missed seeing her the past few years but will always remember her kind heart.

The Cards - April 03, 2025 at 12:43 PM

SC

“ Steve C. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Irene G. Benfatti.

Steve C. - April 03, 2025 at 12:20 PM

BS

“ I'LL ALWAYS REMEMBER THE FIRST TIME I SAW IRENE. SHE CAME INTO THE SNACK BAR AT WILLIAM PATERSON U. EVERY HEAD TURTLED TO SEE THIS GORGEOUS GIRL. THAT IS HOW I WILL ALWAYS REMEMBER HER. MUCH LOVE AND GIVE EUGENE A BIG HUG WHEN YOU SEE HIM.

BEVERLY SUDOL - April 03, 2025 at 10:17 AM

BS

“ Beverly S. planted a grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Irene G. Benfatti.

Beverly S. - April 03, 2025 at 10:09 AM

JM

“ Vincent and Tania, I am so devastated to hear about the loss of Irene. She was so smart and classy and a true role model as an educational leader, mother and friend. She was such a pivotal person in my life and I looked up to her in so many ways. She taught me many things. She brought me together with Tania which was a friendship that meant so much to me. Sending so much love as I will be thinking of you all endlessly.

Joan Molee - April 02, 2025 at 04:21 PM



“ I met Irene and Tania under very unusual circumstances. Afterwards, almost every day as I left my home I would see Vince and Irene sitting at the edge of the pond feeding their ducks. I also witnessed the love that Vince had for his dear wife Irene. My deepest condolences, Peggy Callahan

Peggy Callahan - April 02, 2025 at 04:18 PM