



## Sandra Lillard

July 18, 1952 - January 14, 2022

Sandra Jean Nesmith Lillard died peacefully January 14, 2022 surrounded by loved ones.

Sandra was born on July 18, 1952 in Huntsville, Texas to Johnnie Taylor Loving and Elmer Otis Nesmith. She married Benny Lillard in 1971 and he preceded her in death in 2015. Benny was a kind and loving husband, and they enjoyed a long, happy marriage.

Sandra was raised in Pine Prairie and spent most of her life in Huntsville. She attended the Pine Prairie School for part of elementary school and graduated from Huntsville High School in 1970. She was primarily a homemaker and at times worked in a restaurant, cleaners, meat market, and as the manager of a local CPA office.

Sandra may have lived an ordinary life on the surface, but underneath she was one of the most intelligent, imaginative people many of us have ever met. She was a prolific reader who could tell and write a great story. Her favorite authors were Margaret Atwood and Stephen King. She was honest to a fault, funny, and wicked sarcastic. She loved her family more than most can understand, doted on her pets, and was a second mother to many. Sandra was an excellent crochet artist and trivia player. She was a life-long Elvis fan, liked taking day trips to the casino, and looked forward to spending time with

family and friends.

She leaves behind her daughter Nesi Lillard and beloved granddaughter Viviana Lillard. Sandra loved Nesi and Vivi more than anything in the world, and moved in to help Nesi care for Vivi when Vivi was a baby. When Vivi wouldn't stop crying, Sandra would sing Unchained Melody off-key and at the top of her lungs - and it worked every time (even though it drove Nesi a little crazy).

She is also survived by her mother, Johnnie Loving, her sister Debbie Coleman, sister Rhonda Coleman Gomez and brother-in-law Oscar Gomez, niece Jessica Gomez, nephews Alex Gomez, Jonathan Coleman, and Patrick Gomez, aunt Mary Benson, and brother and sister-in-law Joe and Shirley Lillard.

As an aunt, mother, and grandmother, Sandra had an extraordinary imagination that she used to fill children's lives with magic and laughter. She was the family historian, and always had a knack for knowing people's most embarrassing childhood moments and bringing them up at the worst/best times. She learned to cook good southern food from her mother and grandmother, and became ALMOST as good of a cook as both of them. Chicken and dumplings were one of her favorites.

As the eldest daughter, Sandra kept her younger sisters close. Rhonda, the youngest, spent many nights at Sandra and Benny's house when she was a teenager. It made her feel grown-up to be at her big sister Sandra's house, and Sandra had a way of connecting with younger people and making them feel at home and understood. Her house and arms were always open to anyone who needed a friend or a mother. If you went to Sandra feeling defeated or helpless, you left feeling empowered and fierce. A quote from her favorite book, *The Handmaid's Tale*, sums up much of her life's wisdom:

"Nolite te bastardes carborundorum"

Sandra will be missed in many ways, but most of all her family will miss laughing with her.

Honorary pallbearers are Jessica Gomez, Alex Gomez, Jonathan Coleman, Patrick Gomez, Joe Lillard, Will Isbell, Alyssa Dixon Crockett, and Lacy Lansford.

A celebration of life is scheduled for Sunday, March 6 at the Raven Lodge in Huntsville State Park, where Sandra and Benny loved to spend time fishing. Family and friends are invited to drop in anytime from 1pm to dark.

# Previous Events

## Family and Friends

MAR 6. 1:00 PM.

anytime

## Celebration of Life

MAR 6.

Raven Lodge

# Tribute Wall



“ *Sandra Lillard*

November 15, 2022 at 08:33 PM



“ *My prayers and thoughts go to the family of Sandra and Benny Lillard on her passing. I remember them since the 80's because we shared memories on fishing, hunting, cooking, and the community. Those were enjoyable moments when we would meet at their home or in town. She is home with our Lord and Benny enjoying time again together.*

**M. Hyvl** - March 01, 2022 at 03:58 PM



“ *Hello friends and family. I'm Rhonda, Sandra's sister and we are looking for stories or special memories from Sandra's friends to share at the memorial. If you have one you would like to share but can't join us at the service, or just don't want to read it aloud yourself: please send them along to us here or at*

*Rhondagmz@gmail.com*

*Thank you so much for loving her!*

**rhonda** - February 28, 2022 at 01:38 PM



“ *<a href="https://www.shmfh.com/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518"; target="\_blank">Memorial Trees</a> was purchased for the family of Sandra Lillard.*

February 24, 2022 at 01:28 PM

MG

“ *Martha Grisham lit a candle in memory of Sandra Lillard*



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**Martha Grisham** - February 11, 2022 at 01:10 PM

PO

“ *Patricia Ondras lit a candle in memory of Sandra Lillard*



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**Patricia Ondras** - February 10, 2022 at 06:45 PM

DH

“ *Dianna Faulkner Holbrook lit a candle in memory of Sandra Lillard*



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**Dianna Faulkner Holbrook** - February 09, 2022 at 08:38 PM

BP

“ *Prayers for the family. So sorry for your loss.*



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**beverly pegoda** - February 09, 2022 at 08:23 PM

MC

“ I’m sending all of you as much love as Sandra gave away, an off color Joke, and a trip to the Sonic, on me. I will see you all at the lodge. There are lots of stories to share . Sandra, look after all of our little fur babies on the Big Blue. I love you.

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**Marjean Cresgee** - February 09, 2022 at 05:35 PM