

## RITTGERS



Mateele Blessing Rittgers died on Thursday, July 26, 2012, a victim of ovarian cancer. She was born June 22, 1940 in Mexico, Missouri to

Myron E. Blessing and Margaret Hughes Blessing of Kansas City.

She was preceded in death by her parents and an infant son.

She is survived by her husband of 50 years, Courtney, her son Trenton M. Rittgers and his wife, Janay Wilmot Rittgers of El Paso, her daughter, Rana Rittgers-Simonds and her husband, Patrick J. Simonds of Alpharetta, Georgia, her grandchildren, Mairin Mateele Simonds, Maeve Marie Simonds, Rowan Patrick Simonds, Christopher Adrian Bohn and his wife, Jill Lay Bohn of Denver, Colorado, Andrea Bohn Crabb and her husband, Dr. Benjamin Edward Crabb, M.D. of El Paso, great grandchildren Madison Taylor Bohn, Asher Maddox Crabb, Allison Ryann Bohn, and Mathis Nathaniel Crabb.

Mateele attended Kansas State University and graduated with honors from Stephens College in Columbia, Missouri with at Bachelors' Degree in Fine Arts. She was a member of Delta Delta Delta Sorority. Mateele was an Army wife for the first 21 years of her marriage, serving in that role with distinction during the country's difficult Vietnam era. Upon arrival in El Paso in the summer of 1979, on her family's 19th move, she set aside her professional art and began a political career that spanned nearly 20 years. She is best known for her service as the Eastside City Representative on City Council during the Azar administration. Before she was elected to that post, she served as President of the League of Women Voters of El Paso; State Director of the League of Women Voters of Texas; Director of the El Paso Commission for Women, heading the task force on family violence; Lt. Governor's appointee to the select committee on juvenile justice and nominee, Texas Women's Hall of Fame, one of six El Paso Women

nominated in 1989. Her community service contributions during that time were equally impressive. She was devoted to curbing domestic violence; promoting acknowledgement of Gifted and Talented children and supporting the Mental Health Association of El Paso. Despite a glowing recommendation from the El Paso Times on April 13 and 14, 1991 that highlighted some of her most important accomplishments and declaring that she ought to be re-elected to City Council, she was not. Soon thereafter she accepted an appointment from the late Governor Anne Richards to be a member of the State of Texas Auto Theft Task Force, one of six private citizens selected to work with government officials and law enforcement of major Texas municipalities with a mission to reduce auto theft state wide. In this role, Mateele brought millions of dollars to El Paso to begin the auto theft prevention authority of the El Paso Police Department. Mateele retired from political life after the turn of the century in order to travel abroad and pursue her love of gardening, as well as, enjoy more thoroughly her Chinese Pugs Franklin and Eleanor, yellow dog Democrats. In September 2009, Mateele was found to have ovarian cancer which had quietly developed to Stage IIIc. Despite a spirited struggle which involved abdominal surgery and 40 plus chemotherapy sessions, Mateele succumbed to this insidious disease. Mateele asked that her remains be cremated and that there be a memorial service at a later time.

Service arrangements entrusted to the care of FUNERARIA DEL ANGEL MARTIN EAST 1460 GEORGE DIETER DRIVE EL PASO, TEXAS 79936. 915-855-8881.

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