

Valerie Hillyer, 73, of Williamsburg, Virginia passed away unexpectedly on Friday, April 10, 2020. She is survived by her husband, Richard Hillyer; daughter, Victoria Brantley; son, Scott Hillyer and her grandchildren Rachel Brantley, Maxwell Hillyer, and Sadie Hillyer.

Valerie was born in Jacksonville, Florida to Gerald Phillips and Phyllis Hawkins. She grew up largely in Hampton, Virginia and is a graduate of Hampton High School. In 1968 she graduated from Longwood College and immediately took her first English teaching position in Annapolis, Maryland while waiting for her future husband, Rick, to graduate from the Naval Academy.

They were married in June 1969 and last summer celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary with a fabulous party full of friends and family.

Valerie was a devoted middle and high school English teacher and worked hard for over 40 years to bring the best out in each of her students. As a Navy wife, she taught all over the world and to all different types of students, each time taking on the new challenges head on and embracing the differences. In the final years of her career, Valerie was a high school librarian where she loved everything from selecting books for the collection, reading to the Head Start children, supporting student research papers, assisting teachers with curriculum development and lesson plans, and participating in programs for young readers.

With a full-time job and husband who was often at sea during the children's younger years, she is remembered by her two children as a loving mom who had a strength they did not quite understand until they were adults. She supported her children fully and was at every swim meet, band concert, or art exhibit. She loved all the major events in their lives and would beam with pride and love each time.

In retirement, Valerie enjoyed her church, master gardener community, traveling the world, crafting and scrapbooking events, reading, journaling, coffee visits with friends, and loving her grandchildren. A memorial service will be held when it is safe for her community of friends and family to come together and celebrate her life together. Bucktrout of Williamsburg is assisting the family.

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