

Tribute to Freddie Venturoni

1923-2023

Celebration of Life

Rohan Rec Center, Eisenhower Room

Saturday, July 15, 2023

2 pm – 3 pm



Painting by Mike Daley

If you never had the privilege of meeting and knowing Freddie, here is a glimpse into the amazing person she was. She was a devoted and involved member of both VAA and VAL.

Freddie was interested in art since a child. In high school she had a mentor who encouraged her. She won a scholarship to an art school in Chicago. When her father was going through her portfolio, he didn't exactly like what he saw... "male nudes." She then had to quit that art school, and instead went on to business college. She loved telling that story.

Freddie and her husband raised six children and retired in Keowee Keys, South Carolina. On the way to a wedding one day, her husband felt he needed to get to a doctor fast. They got to a doctor's office where he died in her arms from an aorta rupture. As a widow, she had to make a new life for herself.

She got a job working for a realtor and, when it was slow, she would make drawings of houses that were in the sale ads on the wall. A realtor liked what he saw and had her start drawing houses that he sold to give to his clients. She loved architectural drawings. It was the beginning of a new career for her. After several years, Freddie decided she wanted to live nearer to her son in Maitland, Fl. A friend shared information on The Villages in a local paper. After checking it out, she ended up building a house and moved to The Villages.

Freddie began drawing buildings in the Villages and selling them at the Square on Vendor Night. Through these drawings on calendars and cards she met so many great people and friends. She became a very well-known artist and did countless commissions. She loved The Villages and took part in many art shows. She went to all of the shows and exhibits in her golf cart, packing all of her things in the back and driving some distance from Santa Domingo to arrive at the rec centers by 8 am.



Photo by Dave Boege



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When the Villages had a contest for people to submit drawings for the new Rohan Rec Center, Freddie created a drawing to submit. On the day she had to deliver the drawing, it was raining hard. Freddie always got around with her golf cart, so she put the sides down on her cart and headed from the North end of the Villages to the south end. As the rain got harder and the puddles got deeper, water began running through her cart. Since this was before the tunnel to Rohan had been completed, she had to park her golf cart and walk over the hill to get there. By the time she arrived at Rohan, she was drenched! The staff immediately found towels and got her dried off. It was worth the effort, as she got the job! To complete this mural, a neighbor made stretch bars to accommodate the canvas (which was 8.5

ft x 11 ft.) in her dining room. She started in the garage, but it was too small, too dark, and too hot. She worked from a ladder and a kitchen stool with no safety net! Her drawing is now a 6 ft x 7 ft mural at Rohan and is an amazing sight.

Freddie had many great years and great friends in The Villages, but it eventually was time for her to cut back. She moved to assisted living in Orlando where the activity directors had her teach drawing to residents, which she really enjoyed. She later moved to a skilled care nursing home, where she lived until she passed not long after her 100th birthday. She was an extremely friendly and warm person to everyone she met. She is greatly missed.

Verdelle “Freddie” Venturoni passed away on Friday, June 9, 2023, in Winter Park, FL. She is survived by 6 children, 12 grandchildren, and 16 great grandchildren. Following a private graveside service, she will be laid to rest next to her husband in Forest Hill Cemetery, Glen Ellyn, IL, where they lived for many years while raising their family.

(Much of the information in this tribute was from a good friend of Freddie, Connie Phelps, with other memories contributed by Diane Weekley and Fran Naughton.)