



## Lucila "Lucy" Willis-Hilliard

June 30, 1938 - May 30, 2026

Lucila "Lucy" Willis-Hilliard, 87, of Peoria, peacefully passed away on Saturday, May 30, 2026, at Grand View Alzheimer's Special Care Center in Peoria.

She was born in Naval, Biliran, Philippines on June 30, 1938, to Jose and Mercedes (Matugas) Vero. In April of 1965, she married James Willis in the Philippines; he preceded her in death on June 27, 1982.

She was also preceded in death by four siblings.

Surviving are her children, Jim (Bonnie) Willis of Peoria, Christina (Brett) Newnam of Peoria, Jesselee Jones (Emily) of Nashville, TN, and Cynthia (Terry) Rigsby of Florence, KY; 2 sisters, Marina Escamis of Las Vegas, NV and Carlito Vero of Alabama; 7 grandchildren; and 5 great grandchildren.

Lucy worked as a forklift driver at Caterpillar Inc. for four years before beginning her career at PARC, where she served as the Program Director for over 20 years.

She cherished being a mother, grandmother, and enjoyed traveling, especially to Charleston, South Carolina and Nashville, Tennessee. She also had a deep love for cooking and gardening, sharing her warmth and creativity through her wonderful meals and beautiful gardens. After retiring, she dedicated time volunteering at Luthy Botanical Gardens.

She was a member at St. Monica Catholic Church in East Peoria before becoming an active member at Holy Family Catholic Church in Peoria. She also belonged to the Filipino American Society.

Private burial will be at Fondulac Cemetery in East Peoria. Gary Deiters Funeral Home & Cremation Services in East Peoria is assisting the family. Memorial contributions may be made to EP!C or Grand View. Online condolences may be left at [www.GaryDeitersFH.com](http://www.GaryDeitersFH.com).

# Cemetery Details

## Fondulac Cemetery

143 Arnold Road  
East Peoria, IL 61611