



Phyllis Diane Santillan

November 25, 1949 - August 17, 2026

Gainesville, Florida

In Gainesville, on August 17, 2026, Phyllis Diane Santillan died at 76. Born in Gainesville on November 25, 1949, into a Mexican-American household that treated work as a language. Early on, she decided that a paycheck and a handshake should weigh the same.

She drove routes that were also neighborhoods. A transfer punch worn smooth marked years riders could feel. Colleagues still mention a transfer punch worn smooth.

In 1972 she married Dennis. The marriage was not a speech; it was groceries, repairs, and two sons and a daughter walked to school in weather that did not care. When Dennis died in 2019, she kept what still worked: the early walk, the small garden, the call on Sundays.

Neighbors remember a rake leaned against a shared fence after a storm. She preferred the hour before a town fully wakes. Gainesville was home enough that she never rehearsed an introduction. The extra coffee is still in the thermos.

What remains is not a legend but a practice: showing up, keeping a promise, leaving a place better than you found it. Her life was the kind America is built from and too often forgets to name.

Services

Services in Gainesville will be simple: stories, coffee, and the names of people who showed up. Flowers optional; support for a local clinic or trade scholarship preferred.

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