



## Ivery Jean Anderson

November 17, 1940 - May 26, 2026

Ivery Jean Anderson passed away peacefully on the morning of May 26, 2026, after a short illness. She was 85.

Born November 17, 1940, in Tuskahoma, Oklahoma, to Troy and Mary (Sumpter) Kennedy, Ivery was just a year old when her family moved west to Oakland, California. She grew up in the Oakland area, where her younger sister joined the family, and later San Leandro. At the University of California, Berkeley, she met Paul Dean Anderson — the man who would become her partner in everything for the next 64 years. They were married on January 27, 1962, in Richmond, California, and shortly after they graduated from Cal that June, the newlyweds moved to Boston so Paul could pursue his PhD at MIT.

During the Boston years, Ivery served as District Director and Summer Camp Director for Camp Fire Girls in Lynn, Massachusetts. When Paul completed his doctorate, the couple moved to Bartlesville, Oklahoma in January 1966 for Paul's career at Phillips Petroleum Co. There they raised their two children, Michael and Michele.

Michael was born with Down Syndrome, and the experience of raising him reshaped Ivery's life's work. She and Paul joined a group of parents of developmentally disabled children, and as that community took on more ambitious projects, they saw a desperate need for quality housing for the

adults they served. Ivery helped establish ARC Group Homes and served as its Executive Director for more than 20 years, ultimately providing homes for several hundred developmentally disabled residents across Washington County.

Her advocacy earned her recognition throughout the region. The Bartlesville Civitan Club named her Citizen of the Year in 1983, and the Bartlesville Women's Network honored her as History-Maker of the Year in 2019. Under her leadership, ARC Group Homes, Inc. was named Provider of the Year by the Tulsa ARC in 1992. She served on the boards of the Washington County Association for Retarded Citizens, Employability (later named AbilityWorks of Oklahoma), the Oklahoma Association for Retarded Citizens, ARC Industries, Inc., and the Oklahoma Mental Retardation Advisory Board, and she was an active member of the Service League of Bartlesville and the Oklahoma Community Providers Association.

Beyond her work, Ivery had a deep love of travel. She and Paul explored much of Europe, the British Isles, the Mediterranean, Australia and New Zealand, Mexico, Costa Rica, Venezuela, Puerto Rico, several Caribbean islands, Canada, and 49 of the 50 United States — often bringing one or both of their children along for the adventure.

Ivery was preceded in death by her parents and her son Michael. She is survived by Paul, her husband of 64 years; her sister Esther Adams of Escalon, California; her daughter Michele Severt and son-in-law Ron Severt of Issaquah, Washington; and her three grandchildren, Zoe Severt, Zachary Severt, and Alexa (Lexi) Severt.

A celebration of Ivery's life will be held at the 1908 Speakeasy behind Lollipop's (309 S Dewey, Bartlesville) on Saturday, May 30, 2026, from 1:30 pm to 4:00 pm. It will be a come and go buffet luncheon. Enter from the back

alley.

In lieu of flowers the family requests donations to Ability Works

<https://abilityworksok.org/#donate-header>

# Upcoming Events

## Celebration of Life

MAY 30. 1:30 PM - 4:00 PM (CT)

1908 Speakeasy

309 S Dewey

Bartlesville, OK 74006

*Behind Lollipop's*