



Terri Rose Saltiel

March 11, 1925 - April 1, 2026

Terri Rose Saltiel, adored wife of Jack Saltiel, died of natural causes, at Big Bend Hospice on April 1, 2026. Terri was born in Halberstadt, Germany at the foothills of the Harz Mountains on March 11, 1925. A Holocaust survivor, she was seven years old in January, 1933 when Hitler came to power and she instantly became a nonperson. She could no longer go to school and her non-Jewish friends would no longer talk to her. Etched in her mind were instances such as being taken to the teacher who had taught piano to her elder brother and sister and being turned away with “I don’t teach Jewish children.”, or being lost in a snow storm at night with a friend, finally finding and being welcomed in a hostel, only to be turned away back in the snow when it was discovered that they were Jewish, or the time she spied a shiny brand new bicycle right before her birthday, only not to be presented it because the day before, Hitler youth knocked a Jewish boy down from his bicycle and beat him, brutally. Terri never knew her biological father. Her brother and sister had been sent to Berlin where there were better Jewish schools and she was very close to Cici Feurstein, her mother. One night in 1938, the Gestapo came before dinner and took her mother. Terri’s inquiries the next day were fruitless and she never saw her again. Sometime later a knock on the door and a voice on the other side warned her stepfather that they were picking up the men and he escaped to Belgium, only to be caught and taken from there. Terri managed to escape on the Kindertransport in 1939, a few days before Germany attacked Poland. She spent two years with other children in

Scotland in the Whittingehame Farm School, the Balfour Castle, that the Balfour family had made available to the Jewish children. It had been owned by the Lord Balfour of the 1917 Balfour Declaration that promised a homeland for the Jews in Palestine. Terri, eventually made it to London where she apprenticed in photography and in 1948, clandestinely, stole into Israel and joined the Israeli army, a little after the conclusion of the war with the Arabs. Her English was impeccable and she learned Hebrew from the Jewish Bible, that she considered excellent literature. Terri came to the United States in 1961, primarily, to terminate a failed marriage. In New York she studied speech therapy with Emil Froeschels, a giant in speech pathology, and in 1964 she came to the University of California, Berkeley to continue speech therapy studies. Terri and Jack Saltiel, a chemistry postdoctoral fellow, happened to sit next to each other at a showing of Shakespeare's A Midsummer's Night Dream and laughed at all the same places. Laughter was a common bond as was a shared Holocaust survival experience and a romance ensued. Terri and Jack were married on September 14, 1965 in Tallahassee where Jack is a Professor of Chemistry at Florida State University. Terri fell in love with Tallahassee's natural environment. She admired the woods and could not understand why anyone would obliterate natural vegetation and substitute a lawn for it. To build their house, Terri and Jack bought land on the shores of the Alford Arm of Lake Lafayette. They cleared the felled trees under Talquin Electric's (TE's) line and planted shrubs. Soon thereafter, TE came and sprayed agent orange in a forty-foot swath under their line, and that is when Terri's fight to protect Tallahassee's natural environment began. It took 3 years and 7 months to prepare the case and find the lawyer for the Saltiels to see their day in court. TE came to court claiming the right to keep its lines clear. We spray every four years, they said and the Saltiels are due for another spraying, but Terri had so thoroughly prepared the case that she prevailed and TE's agent orange spraying over several counties stopped. The building of her dream house is notable. Terri did not want its foundation to harm the roots of the ancient giant live oaks that surrounded the

selected site and Jack could draw cubes. A cantilevered house design resulted and the general consensus was “it cannot be done” and “you cannot afford it”. That was a challenge to Terri. After several architect failures, an engineer was found who drew the steel plans and Terri ended up the contractor who found a builder’s dictionary and built the glass dream house exactly as she wanted it. In the Saltiel house, one is in the forest. And then, Lake Lafayette (LL) became a huge environmental challenge. In the early 1970s Terri discovered that LL had been taken off the map and that the Master Drainage Plan designated it as a major recipient of Tallahassee’s runoff. They plan to convert it into a sewer, she said. For 20 years straight Terri fought the development interests constantly. She left no stone unturned and once, because the support she obtained from State was halfhearted, Terri walked into Reagan’s White House and got the Justice Department to come to Tallahassee and defend LL. She started Clean Water Inc. and fought to have developments hold water runoff on site. She damaged her health taking groups of people on walking tours exposing local governments’ bad water management practices. She attended every water management meeting and was so well prepared that they called her “spider woman”. After 20 years she was exhausted, but LL has been on the map and has not turned into a sewer. She was a devoted, loving wife to her husband, bought all his clothes, improved the English of his publications and even cut his hair. They met in laughter and continued to laugh together. To watch a sunset through Terri’s eyes was a privilege, Terri was a force for good. Her passing leaves an enormous void in all who loved her.

A graveside service will be held at 11:00 AM, Tuesday, April 7, 2026 at Meadowwood Cemetery, 700 Timberlane Rd. Tallahassee, FL. Todd Wahlquist is assisting the family with their arrangements (850-385-2193, www.bevisfh.com).

Cemetery Details

MeadowWood Memorial Park

700 Timberlane Rd.
Tallahassee, FL 32312

Previous Events

Graveside commital

APR 2. 11:00 AM (ET)

MeadowWood Memorial Park
700 Timberlane Rd.
Tallahassee, FL 32312

Tribute Wall

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“ I have fond memories of Terri, and of long conversations about the issues that were close to her heart. She informed me, as a new commissioner, about lake Lafayette and the on going threats to the lake due to development and the county landfill. I always appreciated her honest assessment of the situation and proposed solutions. My condolences to those she loved and those who loved her.

Carol Kio-Green

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