

Lilo Koehl, obituary and photo from The Daily Courier, Prescott, AZ , 9/14/15 (obituary also has date of 9/6/2015, 6 am.

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Lilo Koehl, whose fortitude and independent-thinking helped her survive annihilation and later personal devastation by twice re-inventing her life in new places, died peacefully Aug. 10, 2015 at the Marley House hospice in Prescott. She was 96.

She is survived by her children, Stefan, Jeremy and Rosyl (Sarah); her grandchildren, Rainbow, Percival and Genevieve; and her great-grandson, Twain; as well as nephews, Ernest and John Bergmann.

Born Lieselotte Franziska Eisenhardt less than a month after the end of the First World War in Neuwied am Rhine, Germany, Lilo grew up in Dresden in a secular Jewish family. As Lilo reached adulthood, life became increasingly difficult under the persecution of the Nazis and in the spring of 1939 Lilo left Germany. Lilo's mother, her younger sister and her sister's husband and child did not get out and subsequently died in concentration camps. Meanwhile, Lilo set about rebuilding her life in the U.S. and after a couple years was hired as a teacher at a preschool for low-income children in Boston.

While attending a public program there to improve her English, she met her husband, Robert Koehl, a Harvard student volunteer. They married in 1943. After World War II, Robert returned to Harvard and Lilo nurtured their two young sons. Always practical

and down-to-earth, Lilo created a rich and loving home environment despite her husband's meager graduate-student income. Lilo's way of talking was direct, sometimes even blunt, no subject was off-limits. In 1955 when her husband was hired to teach at the University of Nebraska, the family moved to Lincoln where they joined the Unitarian church. At ease with the freedom of belief and the liberal values of that denomination, Lilo found many kindred spirits in the congregation and made friendships that lasted the rest of her life. In 1958, she gave birth to the daughter she had longed for, naming her after her murdered sister. In 1964, the family moved to Madison, Wisconsin, where her husband began teaching at the university and Lilo made more friends at the Unitarian church there. However, despite her efforts to save it, their marriage ended in 1976. Determined to rebuild her life, Lilo sold her house, put her possessions in storage and set off alone in her little red Volkswagen beetle to explore the western United States and find a new home. She eventually settled in Phoenix, finding employment at the Broadway Dept. store there. Retiring in 1983, she moved to Prescott, Arizona, where she joined the Prescott Unitarian-Universalist Fellowship (PUUF) in which she took an active part in services, political action and social events. Marked by the terrible death toll and human suffering of war, Lilo remained a determined advocate for peaceful solutions to social disagreements throughout her life.

Donations in Lilo's name will be gratefully accepted by PUUF. Mail to PUUF, Box 5, Prescott, AZ 86302. A celebration of Lilo's life will be at 10 a.m. Sept. 15, 2015 at PUUF, 945 Rancho Vista Drive, Prescott, Arizona.

Information provided by survivors.