



Barbara Lorraine (Smith) Olsen

MAY 10, 1932 - FEB 13, 2019



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O bituary AURORA

Barbara Lorraine (Smith) Olsen was born to beaming, devoted parents Viola and Sylvan Smith on May 10, 1932 in the same San Pedro, California hospital where her own four children and two oldest grandchildren would be born years later. The eldest of two daughters, Barbara was extremely patriotic and often confided with pride and a hint of disapproval that her father enlisted in the Army by misrepresenting his age, and at 17 years old became an ambulance driver in the bloody fields of World War I. In spite of the horrors of war that young Sylvan faced, he was so impressed with the beauty of the Alsace Lorraine region of France, that Barbara received her middle name in its honor. Young Barbara demonstrated her own love of country by riding up and down the street on her bike, rallying the neighborhood "troops" at the age of nine when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. Growing up, there was never a doubt about Barbara's absolute belief in the civic responsibility of voting, nor for whom she would vote. Barbara was just as devoted to family as she was to her country and lovingly helped care for her younger sister Faye Jean, who suffered from juvenile diabetes and sadly passed away just three years after Barbara was married to Ray Norman Olsen in front of more than 300 friends and relatives at Trinity Lutheran Church in San Pedro, California in 1954. Though ill, Faye served as Barbara's maid of honor, and in a continuing tribute to Faye, Barbara and Ray named their daughter Karen Faye, and the name carried down another generation to Karen's daughter Bethany Faye, and their son Eric's daughter Lily Jean. Always an excellent student and mentor to children of all ages, Barbara graduated with honors from Narbonne High School and Long Beach State University, attending Harbor Junior College and Whittier College along the way. She majored in education and graduated with distinction on June 19, 1952. After graduation, Barbara was an elementary teacher and a reading specialist in the Los Angeles Unified School District, where her mother was also a teacher. Always the smartest one in the family, as a second career, Barbara later went back to school and received her Real Estate license in Ohio, purchased Weehawken Summer Day Camp, and ran the Camp with the able assistance of her youngest son Arne for five seasons. She and Ray were devoted and enthusiastic members of Lord of Life Lutheran Church in Bainbridge for 45 years. Barbara was



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beautiful inside and out. She won the Miss San Pedro beauty pageant as a teen, and was well known for her sparkling clear soprano singing voice that she freely shared with church choirs, her schools' theater and music programs, and at home with her family. Her children and grandchildren carry on her love of music as demonstrated through multiple generations of school, theatrical, and church performances, and even a family rock band that is still in operation today. Barbara had a passion for travel. Long before people had the notion of a "bucket list," Barbara kept stacks of magazine clippings and papers by her bed that represented months or even years of travel research used to meticulously plan out trips to locales near and far, exotic and prosaic. Yes, she liked to experience new places and cultures, but it really was all about sharing these experiences with the people she loved. She would then carefully select a few treasures from each trip as reminders of each precious sojourn. Barbara was well known for her love of birds and animals. At times phone calls with her were interrupted by impromptu wildlife or pet sightings - sometimes one wasn't sure if she still talking to you or to the cat in her room or the deer strolling past her window. Barbara was a warm and kind friend, counselor, and listener and quickly tucked our friends and later spouses under her protective wing. All of our friends wanted a Mom, and later a Grandma, like ours. But we were the ones lucky enough to have Barbara and share her with this world. She kept every program, news clipping, school project, work promotion announcement, cards, pictures, letters, anything she thought was important regarding each of us because she was so proud of us all - a gift of love that we will always keep in our hearts. Barbara and Ray lived an over- six decade love story. We recently found an anniversary card from Ray to Barbara that sums up their relationship very nicely: "Barb, thinking of you and remembering everything of our years together. I remember the gentle loving look in your eyes and the words that spoke caring so well. I never knew love could be so beautiful nor so warm. I'm happy for the future days we'll have together so that as time passes I can say with gladness: I remember, I remember , Barbara!" Barbara's last words to Ray were, "Thank you." No wife, mother, or grandmother has ever been more devoted to her family, and we will all miss her guiding light greatly. But we are confident and grateful that she passed peacefully into heaven and back into her husband's loving arms minutes before midnight Wednesday, February 13, just in time for Valentine's Day. Barbara is preceded in death by her parents, sister Faye, and by 18 months, her beloved husband Ray. She is survived by her children Eric (Dawn), Kirk (Barry), Karen (Robin) and Arne; grandchildren Kristen (Iosif), Christopher (Saara), Bethany, Robert, Lily, and Alex; and great grandchildren Ilta, Halti, Pavlos, and Michael. A Celebration of Life for Barbara will be held Saturday March 23, 2019, 1:00 P.M. at Lord of Life Lutheran Church, 17989 Chillicothe Road, Chagrin Falls, Ohio 44023 with Pastor Robert Henderson officiating. A time of fellowship at the church will immediately follow. Final resting place will be at Green Hills Memorial Park, Rancho Palos Verdes, California.



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Arrangements are by the Green Family Funeral Home & Crematory Service in Mantua, where her Video-Gift tribute, condolences and memories may be viewed at www.GreenFamilyFuneralHome.com.

To send flowers to the family or plant a tree in memory of Barbara Lorraine (Smith) Olsen, please visit our floral store.

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Tribute Wall

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ES

Expression Of Sympathy posted:

A TRADITIONAL FUNERAL BASKET was sent on March 22, 2019
May your hearts be warmed
In the lonely days to come
With thoughts of her love.

March 22 at 10:29 AM

ES

Expression Of Sympathy posted:

An ELEGANCE AND SIMPLICITY STANDING SPRAY was sent on March 20, 2019
From the ICS family:
Adrienne, Vivian, Mohammad, Rukiya, Hussein, Minh, Ken and Sha-keith

March 20 at 11:06 AM

ES

Expression Of Sympathy posted:

A GARDEN PATH was ordered on March 20, 2019

March 20 at 7:22 AM

LZ

Lori Zack posted:

My prayers out with you at this difficult time.

February 24 at 10:27 AM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Barbara by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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