



Lorraine Bernice Groeling

August 22, 1921 - October 5, 2019

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Lorraine Bernice (Thompson) Groeling passed away peacefully on Saturday afternoon, October 5, 2019, at the age of 98. She was born on August 22, 1921, in Los Angeles, California, and grew up in Montebello, California. She graduated from Pasadena Academy and Pasadena Nazarene College earning a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology. Her first job was in the filing department of the Los Angeles Citadel (now a mall). During this time, she was engaged to Crayton Groeling, the love of her life. In October 1943, she took a train to Durham, North Carolina to swiftly marry him before he returned to his duties in Germany. Her first child, Joan, was born in August 1944. She adored being a mother. She spent the majority of her time dressing her young daughter in handmade frilly clothes, teaching preschool, and writing letters to her husband who was overseas. Following WWII, she earned an Elementary Teaching Credential from Fresno State College which led to a fulfilling career as a Kindergarten teacher. Lorraine's life spans nine decades of milestones, life-changing periods of history, personal accolades, interests, talents, and wonderful years with family and friends.

Lorraine lived in Southern California before permanently settling down in the Central Valley. She lived on a dairy as a young child. In her early teens, her

parents invested in property near a train station in Montebello. This was convenient for her father who was a trolley driver. She loved "riding the rails" with him. As a teenager, during the Depression, she accompanied her mother to celebrity homes where she helped with household chores and tended small children.

The years between 1942 and 1946 were life changing and stressful, not only for soldiers fighting overseas, but especially for spouses who never knew if their husbands would return home alive. Lorraine was a beautiful, strong woman of faith, full of life, who contributed to the war effort and constantly supported her family with grace. When Crayton returned from the war, their new family lived in El Monte, California, in a friend's garage until they could figure out a plan. They decided to move to San Jose, California, so Crayton could finish school and earn his Secondary Teaching Credential at San Jose State College. Many opportunities followed that choice. Crayton accepted a teaching position at Riverdale High School as a football and track coach and history teacher. Lorraine taught first grade at Westside Elementary before starting the first Kindergarten teacher in Riverdale. She was dedicated to her students, teaching double session (about 60 children each day). She was exceptionally creative and innovative, incorporating agriculture into her curriculum, beautifying her classroom with artistic hand drawn murals, and spending countless hours providing her students with personal instruction and life skills. Teaching became her passion for 32 years. She retired with a Perfect Attendance Certificate, but that was not the end of her career. She continued to substitute in Riverdale, Burrel, Westside, and Riverdale High School for another 20 years.

Her second child, Robert Groeling, was born in 1955. She enthusiastically and energetically balanced raising a family with a fulfilling teaching career for many years. In 1989, she and Crayton relocated to Kingsburg, California, to be closer to their daughter. They continued substitute teaching periodically

and enjoyed the Nazarene Church. They frequently visited their son and his family in Salinas, California. Lorraine would affectionately be called "Myee" or "GG" by her 6 grandchildren. She loved interacting with them through crafts, physical activities, and reading. She was always up for another adventure.

Kingsburg provided many new adventures for Lorraine. She belonged to the Tuesday Club, the Friends of the Library, the Photography Club, the Senior Center, and traveled extensively with her daughter. She was extremely personable; always greeting people with a smile, a kind word, or something witty. Lorraine loved the beauty of nature and looked at life through the eyes of an artist. That artistic eye would lead to photography awards and hand painted watercolor masterpieces. She always told her daughter, "Life is what you make it!" and would sing "I Love You a Bushel and a Peck". Her favorite hymn was "How Great Thou Art" sung many times by her husband and "When the Saints Go Marching In". She came from humble beginnings and lived through nine decades of adversity which strengthened her faith and her attitude of making each day count. The many students she taught, living her faith, her many friendships, and the beauty she created in her artwork will be her legacy.

Lorraine was preceded in death by her parents, Marie and Harold Thompson, and her brother Leonard Thompson and her husband Crayton Groeling. She is survived by Joan and Cliff Bishop, Robert and Meg Groeling, grandchildren; John Bishop, Brian Bishop, Molly Cortina, Thomas Groeling, Laura Groeling, Timothy Groeling, and 10 great grandchildren; Jonas Bishop, Jakob Bishop, Nathan Bishop, Annika Bishop, William Bishop, Katie Bishop, James Bishop, Lauren Bishop-Polo, Everett Dore, and Emery Groeling.

Lorraine's family adopted a planter near Model Drug in Kingsburg to extend and share her love of flowers with friends, shoppers, and anyone in the

downtown area. Her family is also planning to honor her with a dedication of her Kingsburg Train Depot watercolor painting (currently hanging inside the Depot) in March, 2020, at the Kingsburg Depot. A small graveside service will be held on Sunday, Nov. 3rd, at 1:00 p.m. to celebrate her life.

Lorraine's family would like to thank the many caregivers at Park Kingsburg, Genesis, Palliative Care Services, and The Harvest at Fowler for their love and care the past few years. A special thank you goes to Jessica Bishop for her devotion, cooking, companionship, and kindness. Any memorial gifts may be sent to the Alzheimer's Association for further cure research. A Memorial Tribute or personal memory may be offered by logging into www.salserandillard.com <<http://www.salserandillard.com>>

Previous Events

Graveside

NOV 3. 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (PT)

Kingsburg Cemetery
12782 E. Clarkson Avenue
Kingsburg, CA 93631

Tribute Wall



“ *Salsler & Dillard Creighton Chapel created a Tribute Video in memory of Lorraine Bernice Groeling*



Salsler & Dillard Creighton Chapel - October 05, 2019 at 12:00 AM

CS

“ *Colleen Snyder sent a virtual gift in memory of Lorraine Bernice Groeling*



Colleen Snyder - November 01, 2019 at 06:22 PM

LC

“ *Love, Colleen purchased the Treasured Lilies Spray for the family of Lorraine Bernice Groeling.*



Love, Colleen - November 01, 2019 at 06:20 PM



“ *Lavender Reflections Spray was purchased for the family of Lorraine Bernice Groeling.*



October 31, 2019 at 02:40 AM



“ *I loved Mrs. Groeling! She was my Kindergarten teacher at Riverdale Elementary and was such a patient, loving, and kind teacher. I saw her often throughout the years as my aunt was the other Kindergarten teacher and my mom was a 1st grade teacher and I helped in both of their rooms all through elementary and high school.*

Mrs. G was especially patient with me as I couldn't understand a) why I couldn't be in my Aunt Frances' room, and b) why I couldn't call her Aunt Frances when I was at school! She and I had many, many discussions about that!

Thinking of Mrs. Groeling brings back so many warm and fun memories - she made school fun!

She also lived across the street from my grandmother and I would often stop and visit with her after visiting my grandmother!

I am so sorry to hear of her passing but I love the tribute the family wrote about her. I think she always lived life to the fullest and with a loving and faithful heart!

Judi Harlan Sommarstrom - October 30, 2019 at 09:03 PM

JB

Thank you Judi. My mom was quite unique and special. Planning the celebration of her life has been delightful.

Joan Bishop - November 02, 2019 at 11:08 PM