



MUELLER, Sybil Lois

Sybil Lois Mueller was the essence of vitality, adventure, and determination. A beloved wife, mother, grandmother, and member of the Santa Barbara community for the past 12 years, she passed away peacefully on September 4, 2016 surrounded by family and friends.

Sybil was an exceptionally active member of the community, participating in organizations such as Newcomers Club, where she was a past president, and volunteering at numerous others including Casa Esperanza Soup Kitchen, the Santa Barbara International Film Festival and May Madness for the Music Academy of the West. She was on the Women's Board of the Community Arts and Music Association (CAMA) and an active supporter of the Santa Barbara Symphony and Ensemble Theatre. She frequently could be seen doing yoga at the Bay Club and YMCA, as well as hiking with the East Beach Walking Group. A voracious reader, she was also a member of several book clubs.

Sybil was born in New York City in 1939 and lived in Brooklyn, the Bronx and Yonkers until she was 18. During that time, she was surrounded by her immediate family, her grandparents, and countless aunts, uncles and cousins – her father, Richard Kagen, had nine brothers and sisters, and her mother, Ethel, had four.

Growing up she was a bookworm and an exceptionally diligent student, but her passions during her teenage years were singing, dancing and acting. Sybil performed regularly in plays and musicals. Upon graduating from high school, she attended Julliard School of Music in New York but later decided to pursue a career in education, earning a Bachelor of Science degree in education, majoring in mathematics and science, and then a Master of Science degree in psychology.

She devoted her career, which spanned nearly 35 years, to the public education systems of New York City, Lexington (Mass.) and Philadelphia. She began as an algebra teacher, then became a high school guidance counselor, and finally a principal, serving at several inner-city Philadelphia schools over the course of a dozen years. She was also a licensed family therapist and had her own private practice for several years.

During her life, Sybil was an avid tennis player, ice skater, golfer, snow-skier, snow-mobiler, jet skier, water-skier, and hiker. She was into everything from camping, motor boating, sailing and bird-watching, to Tai Chi, and yoga. She even rode 3-wheel off-road vehicles. She loved to play all kinds of games, especially bridge, mahjongg, Monopoly and Scrabble, and she also loved crossword puzzles and did one nearly every day. She loved to cook and barbeque, and she would BBQ just about anything – on a number of occasions she BBQ'd turkey at Thanksgiving.

Sybil travelled the world – including the America's, Europe, Asia, the Middle East, Africa, the Galapagos Islands, Antarctica, New Zealand, and Australia, where she lived for two years. She also travelled extensively throughout the U.S., visiting almost every State and living in several, including New York, New Mexico, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania and California.

She loved lush gardens and beautiful flowers – her favorite was the daisy. She loved animals, especially dogs and cats, and always had one or more of them in the house. She was spirited and forthright and often flamboyant. She had a great sense of humor, loved to laugh and could light up a room. She will be dearly missed but never forgotten by all those who knew her and whose lives she touched.

Sybil leaves behind her beloved husband, Russ, cherished children Ron (Ri ) and Mark (Alison), stepchildren Sue (Tim) and Karen (Greg), sister Elaine, and adored grandchildren Danielle, Kyle, Naomi, Lucy and Jimmy.

A celebration of Sybil's wonderful life will be held on October 1, 2016.