



Marlene Violet Zimmerman

July 27, 1953 - August 14, 2017

Marlene Violet Trissel was born on July 27, 1933 to Harvie A. Trissel and Violet Philbrick Trissel. She was born in the kitchen of the family home on Laurel Street in Napa that had been built by her maternal grandfather, Owen Philbrick. Marlene passed peacefully at home at age 84 on August 14, 2017 with family by her side following a lengthy yet courageous battle with cancer. Following the death of her brother Richard in 1935, the family moved out to Coombsville Road. Marlene attended Mt. George Elementary School, Napa Junior High, Napa High School and Napa Junior College. While in high school, she was just the second girl in school history to run for ASB President but lost to her cousin by a narrow margin. She was chosen the Most Outstanding Theta Rho Girl in the U.S., Canada, and Cuba in 1950. Following graduation from high school in 1951, Marlene attended Napa Junior College and San Jose State University, where she graduated with a degree in Education in 1955. While at SJSU, she met the love of her life, Philip James Zimmerman. Following graduation, she taught second grade for San Jose Unified School District. Marlene and Phil were married in Napa at the First Presbyterian Church in August 1956, with her cousin Audrey Philbrick del Mas and dear friends, Mary Ann Castle Bryan and Martha Wigger Wolfe as her attendants. Phil joined the Navy and was sent to Pensacola for flight training. Their first child, Suzanne, was born in 1958 at Parks Victory Memorial Hospital in Napa. After leaving the Navy, Phil worked for Honeywell and the family moved to San Rafael where Marlene helped to create a playground at

the Marin Arts & Garden Center. Phil later transferred with Honeywell to Sacramento where son Steven was born in 1961 and daughter Sheryl in 1963. The young family then moved to Littleton, Co. where they remained until 1970. Marlene moved with her children, dog, two cats and a turtle back to her family home in Napa. In 1971, she began teaching first grade for the Napa Valley Unified School District. She loved teaching and loved her time with students at Snow, Vichy, Salvador, Shearer, and Napa Junction schools. Following many years in the classroom, Marlene then became both a Reading Specialist and Language Arts Mentor Teacher. In 1986, she was honored to be a Rotary Teacher of the Year and received the Golden Apple Award from the Reading Association in 1990. Later, Marlene served as the Staff Development Resource Teacher for the NVUSD Schools K-6 from 1992 to 1994, when she retired for the first time. Always interested in new and challenging issues, Marlene helped bring Assertive Discipline, Conflict Resolution, and Gender/Ethnic Expectations & Student Achievement to the Napa Valley Unified School District. True to her passion for global peace, Marlene was an active member of Beyond War (a program from Stanford University). She was also a board member of the Napa County Rental Information and Mediation Service and served on the River Schools Charter Council. Finally, the love of children and education again beckoned her to return as a Literacy Coach at Howell Mountain Elementary School. There she worked with the students and teachers helping them with a State funded program for Reading Excellence. She retired from NVUSD for the second time in 2003. As a child, Marlene developed her lifelong adventurous spirit when she would spend countless hours roaming the hills and valleys around her Coombsville home and at the family ranch in Mendocino. As an adult, she traveled extensively including a work/study journey to Ghana in 1991 as a member of the First Presbyterian Church of Napa. This would remain as one of her most outstanding travel adventures. She also enjoyed memorable trips to Yosemite, the Grand Tetons, Alaska, Hawaii, Western Europe, Japan, Taiwan, Turkey, Ecuador, The Galapagos Islands, Costa Rica, Argentina and

Antarctica. She was proud to have touched every continent with the exception of Australia. Marlene was a 50 year member of Eastern Star #189 and Ivy Rebekah #23. She was also a proud member of Covenant Presbyterian Church, AAUW, Heifer International, Napa Valley Retired Teachers Association, and several other organizations. She is survived by her daughter, Suzanne Morrison (Dave Payne) of Corning, son, Steven Zimmerman (Julie) of Spokane, and daughter, Sheryl Zimmerman Brewster (Bryan) of Napa. Marlene was always proud of her beloved grandchildren, Michelle Bergen (Linck), Jessica Morrison, Chris Ekas, Scott Zimmerman, and Brody Brewster as well as her great-grandchildren, Justice Curtis, Cadence Bergen, Lively Bergen and Aryiah Cosgrove. Marlene was blessed to have had three great great-grandchildren, Cohen, Callan and baby George, whom she unfortunately was never able to meet. Many of Marlenes happiest hours were spent with her grandchildren and great-grandchildren engaging in imaginative play, reading and traveling. She instilled in all the children in her family a love of playing, reading and the importance of education that will be passed on for generations to come. Marlene is also survived by her beloved cousin Audrey Philbrick del Mas of Palm Springs, Ca. Marlenes life was full with many wonderful friends with whom she taught, worked, discussed religion and world affairs, played bridge and bocce ball, gardened, exercised, traveled and most of all laughed. She also enjoyed the time she spent singing with the Napa Valley Community Chorus. Marlene will be fondly remembered for her kind and loving heart, compassionate soul, generous spirit, enthusiastic personality, silly sense of humor, beautiful blue eyes, and warm smile. The family wishes to thank Collabria Care for their support and kind assistance over the past several months. We were extremely fortunate to have found Imelda, Vicky and Lorna, the loving caregivers who took care of Mom from the day she came home after surgery in 2015, until she took her last breath. You are a part of our family and we cant thank you enough for all of the love, care, support and kindness you gave to Mom. We are thankful to know that she is

no longer suffering and has been reunited in Heaven with her parents, brother, cousin Russ Philbrick and many dear friends. Per Marlenes wishes, internment will be private at the Trissel Family plot at Tulocay Cemetary. A memorial service will be held on September 30th at 2:00 pm at Covenant Presbyterian Church, 1226 Salvador Avenue, Napa, Ca. Arrangements are being handled by Treadway & Wigger Funeral Chapel. Condolences may be left for the family by visiting www.treadwaywigger.com. Memorial contributions may be made to Covenant Presbyterian Church, Heifer International, Napa Valley Retired Teachers Association or the American Association of University Women (AAUW).

Funeral Home:

Treadway & Wigger Funeral Chapel

2383 Napa-Vallejo Highway

Napa, CA

US 94558

Tribute Wall



“ 1 file added to the album *Obituary Wall*



Treadway & Wigger Funeral Chapel & Crematory - February 05, 2020 at 09:25 AM



“ *Marlene Violet Zimmerman*

November 19, 2019 at 12:00 AM



“ *I was the flower girl at Marlenes wedding! My dad Jim Grassman was Marlenes neighbor on Coombsville road. I remember meeting her when I was an adult, what a wonderful lady she was and so well thought of! It is so sad to hear of her passing, yet what a wonderful reunion friends and family are having in heaven. That makes me smile 🍷*

June 23, 2019 at 12:00 AM



“ *Your mother was a wonderful mentor to me when I began my teaching career in the late 1980's. She was patient, kind, knowledgeable, and what a sense of humor. I want to send my condolences to all of you for the loss of a wonderful mentor and friend. Sincerely, Donna Kingsford*

October 01, 2017 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear Sheryl and all the family. I want to offer condolences for your loss of an amazing person. Marlene and I bonded on our trip to Antarctica. We, also, attended and enjoyed together many concerts given by Napa Valley Symphony. I miss her terribly. Sheryl, I met you once, and thought how Marlene had raised a wonderful daughter. You are very personable. I can't attend the service, as I broke my right hip. Love to you all, Dee Barclay

September 28, 2017 at 12:00 AM