



Thelma Marie Elam

MAR 13, 1920 - FEB 5, 2020



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Thelma Marie Elam

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Thelma Elam passed peacefully in her sleep the morning of February 5, 2020, with the love and prayers of her family and friends. Born Thelma Marie Alpy on March 13, 1920 at Mercy Hospital in San Diego, Thelma lived almost 100 years of spirited life, and was a source of love, common sense and intelligent perspective to all who knew her.

Thelma grew up in Little Italy and on Pershing Drive among six uncles and an aunt, the many multiple resulting cousins, and dozens of close inter-relationships within the Italian and San Diego fishing communities of the day. She graduated from San Diego High School in 1938, and immediately began her working career. Her facility with people, grounded-ness and business acumen shone brightly, and she quickly ascended to Administrative Manager at San Diego's largest department store at the time, Parmilee-Dormans. She was also a founding member of the Modernaires, the local businesswomen's association of the day. In 1949, she met Navy Lt. Paul E. Elam. They married on January 15, 1950, and upon his reassignment moved first to Stockton, California, then to Honolulu, Hawaii. Paul and Thelma remained married for 61 years, until Paul passed away in 2012.

The first of their three sons, Paul was born in Stockton. After returning to San Diego in 1954, sons Gary and Karl followed. Thelma paused her business career to raise the boys in their Ocean Beach home, but by the late '60's she was back at work managing, and subsequently owning, Ghio's Snack Bar and concession stand at the foot of Broadway in the harbor water taxi building. Subsequently, the Star and Crescent Harbor Excursion Company bought her business, and hired Thelma to be their General Manager for all concessions and hospitality. She remained in that position until she retired in 1985.

Thelma was predeceased by her loving parents, Felix and Mary (Ghio) Alpy, her sister Eileen (Alpy) Peyton, her husband Paul, and many close family members and friends. She is survived by sons Paul (Sheryl), Gary (Marianne) and Karl (Eileen); grandchildren Dyana, Kara, Amanda (Nick), Tim and Greg; and great-grandchildren Nick, Kobe, Jackson, Jordan, Aurora and Nick.



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The entire Elam family is particularly appreciative of, and grateful for, the consistently loving care and service provided to Thelma by both Gateway Gardens in Poway, California, and The Elizabeth Hospice.

At her request services have been limited to children and their children.



Events

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Cemetery Details



Greenwood Memorial Park

4300 Imperial Avenue, San Diego CA 92113



(619) 450-1479





Tribute Wall

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Pat McClure posted:

We are so sorry to hear of Thelma's passing. She was a lovely and gracious woman, with good advice to share and a ready smile. We send our sympathy on your loss. Thelma's neighbors, Pat & Robert McClure

February 17 at 4:14 AM



Memories only last if you share them

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



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