



Carol Ione Jekel

MAY 10, 1943 - JUN 14, 2024



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Carol Ione Richards was born on May 10th, 1943, in San Diego, California, where she would spend most of her life. The fourth child and third daughter of David and Ione Richards, she grew up in the Kensington area along with her two older sisters, Barbara and Pat, her older brother, Bill, and two younger brothers, Dan and Wayne. As a child she was a tomboy, and enjoyed riding her bike and playing stickball with her brothers and other children in the neighborhood, as well as spending summers at the family's second home in Del Mar.

After graduating from Herbert Hoover High School, Carol was accepted into the nursing program at Biola University, and briefly moved to Los Angeles for her training at the Los Angeles General teaching hospital. Ultimately, however, she determined that nursing was not a good fit, and would eventually finish her Bachelor's degree in Health Science at San Diego State College. She considered relocating to Oklahoma City for a Master's Program in Physical Therapy, but ultimately elected to remain in San Diego and marry Richard 'Dick' Jekel of Kirkwood, Missouri, on November 13th, 1971. After marrying, Carol settled into the role of home maker, and only a few years later, she and Dick purchased the La Mesa home where she would live for most of her life.

In 1976, Dick and Carol welcomed their only child, daughter Julie Lorraine. Carol loved being a mother, and took pleasure in being active in the PTA at Julie's schools, as well as transporting her to and helping out with a variety of extracurricular activities such as ballet, piano, Girl Scouts, and choir. She developed a passion for travel and did her best to instill that love in Julie, whether it was traveling to St. Louis or New England to visit Dick's family, driving across the country in the family's motorhome, or venturing further abroad on trips to England, Canada, and South Korea.

Not everything was happy, however. Her father died in 1979, and between 1986 and 1988, she lost both of her sisters and her mother. One good thing to come out of this period was a stronger relationship with her older brother, Bill, who moved into an additional dwelling unit on the La Mesa property in the early 1990s and lived there until his own death in 2002.



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Due to these and other stressors, Carol and Dick's marriage ended in divorce in 1996. With Julie away at college in Pennsylvania, Carol began to devote her time to involvement with her church and in further pursuing her own education. She resumed coursework aimed towards completing a second degree, while also indulging her artistic side for the first time with classes in beadwork, jewelry-making, and sculpture. She returned to Community Covenant Church, of which she and Dick had been founding members, and found new purpose by getting involved with helping some of the church's missionary families.

After the tragic events of September 11th, 2001, Carol developed a new passion; for helping the many refugees who were pouring into San Diego from Iraq, Afghanistan, Sudan, and other conflict-torn countries. She befriended and supported Ayoub, a Sudanese Christian, until he was able to emigrate safely to Canada along with his family. More locally, she worked as a volunteer teaching English to Muslim refugees and helping new immigrants navigate American bureaucracy. She became especially close to the family of Yasin and Roya from Afghanistan, and was considered an extra grandmother by their children. Much to her great pride, Carol was able to be present when both of her adopted families were granted citizenship by their adopted countries.

She also continued to take pride in the accomplishments of her daughter, who moved to Los Angeles in 2001 and pursued a variety of careers in entertainment and customer service before finally finding her calling in post-production media distribution.

Towards the end of her life, her declining health forced Carol to give up her beloved home, at which point she moved into The Montera retirement community, also in La Mesa. There she made new friends and became a favorite of the facility's staff. She was also happy to meet her daughter's boyfriend, Neil, and give the couple her blessing before the end. Carol passed away peacefully on the morning of June 14th, 2024. She is survived by her daughter, Julie, her brothers, Dan and Wayne, and their families.

Carol will be remembered as a woman with a big heart and a strong spirit, who loved people and especially children. She will be deeply missed by everyone whose life she touched.



Memories only last if you share them

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



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