



Marlene Eleta Thomas

May 5, 1934 - December 30, 2020

Marlene Eleta Thomas passed away December 30, 2020, from complications of COVID-19. Although her last address was in Salinas, California, she always considered herself to be a farmer from Nebraska. Born to Oscar and Mary Schulz in Omaha, Nebraska, May 5, 1934, she was raised on a farm and became the wife of a farmer Donald P. Thomas (1929-1978). She graduated with honors as valedictorian from Yutan High School in 1951. Marlene became an expert seamstress and dressmaker and spent many years as a 4-H leader for young, female 4-H members. She was delighted when her family was selected as Farm Family of the Week with Arnold Peterson on WOW-TV in Omaha. Following the death of her husband, Marlene continued to live on the family farm with her younger son Michael P. Thomas who both ran and managed the farm while attending college. Marlene watched with great happiness as Michael and his family took the farm to new levels of success and was thrilled when Michael's son Brauk joined the farming enterprise. Marlene was a proud member of the Daughters of the American Revolution (NSDAR) and treasured history especially as it pertained to the family's connection to both Meriwether Lewis and William Clark and their expedition. The Joslyn Art Museum and Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo and Aquarium were favorite haunts of hers as she was passionate about taking pictures of flowers, birds, and family; the grandchildren coined the phrase "picture taking grandma" as her official title. Traveling was also important to her as she took her twin brothers Alton and Arleigh along to Aksarben and to see the world or

as she traveled with the Hlavaceks to exotic places. She moved from Nebraska to Salinas, California, in 2018 and resided in the assisted living facility Sunrise Villa Salinas with her daughter Monica and son-in-law James Hlavacek living nearby. Marlene evolved into quite the social butterfly in California and frequently joined the Hlavaceks on fun social outings. Marlene was an adventurous soul who lived life to its fullest and will be sorely missed. Predeceasing her were her parents Mary and Oscar Schulz, Donald Thomas (spouse), brothers Alton and Arleigh Schulz, and granddaughter Martina Hlavacek. She is survived by her brother Harold Schulz (Carol); her four children and their spouses David Thomas (Julie), Rhonda Urdang (Bruce), Monica Hlavacek (James), and Michael Thomas (Tychia); thirteen grandchildren; and ten great-grandchildren. Burial will be Nebraska. Because of the Covid virus, the ceremony will be limited to local family. Donations in Marlene's memory may be directed to St. John's Lutheran Church in Yutan, Nebraska, or Mee Memorial Hospital in King City, California.

Cemetery Details

Hollst Lawn Cemetery

630 County Road L
Yutan, NE 68073

Tribute Wall



“ *Marlene Eleta Thomas*

December 10, 2022 at 09:12 AM



“ *I am a little late in finding this out, but to her children - I am so sorry to learn of Marlene's passing. As you girls will remember, I was able to help her get her membership into DAR, as her mother had done before. At the times when I was able to do it, I would swing by Immanuel Living and pick her up. Another resident, Isabella, was a member also, so she was with us. I think she really enjoyed the programs. We shared many stories about things we had in common. Even one of her cousins had been a friend at Wayne State and that was before we knew each other. We would talk every so often by phone and just once after she moved to California. That was the first I had known that she had moved. It was a treasure knowing her and may her memory live on.*

Cindy Barnes - January 10, 2021 at 05:19 PM



“ *RHONDA, BRUCE, ZACHARY & JEFFREY URDANG purchased the Country Basket Blooms for the family of Marlene Eleta Thomas.*



RHONDA, BRUCE, ZACHARY & JEFFREY URDANG -
January 06, 2021 at 10:44 PM

MC

“ When Marlene was a resident at Lakeside Assisted Living in Omaha, I worked for her to help with various activities that were to difficult for her to do. Many times I drove her out to the farm and we would spend hours each time going through hundreds of boxes. Some things she would specify to go to thrift shops but most things she wanted to keep. As she went through boxes, something would trigger a memory. It was fun to hear all her stories. We had a lot of laughs and I enjoyed helping her. A couple of times I even went to the ER to be with her until Michael could get there. I helped her to organize her room as it was very hard for her to throw anything away. Then one day I went to visit her and her room was empty. I was really scared. I found out she had moved to California to be closer to her family. I was very happy for her as she missed them very much. Unfortunately, we lost touch once she moved to California. I continued to miss her. One of the staff at Lakeside sent me a pic of her obituary. I would like to take some flowers to her final resting place. Would someone please send me an email to let me know where she is resting?
Pmcolbyfaith2006@yahoo.com.

Marilyn Colby - January 06, 2021 at 06:15 PM

GR

“ Our heartfelt sympathy In the passing of Marlene. Friends for many years as our parents were friends. Blessings of peace to all the family. Always enjoyed time with Marlene and will have fond memories. Gene & Mary Roncka

Gene & Mary Roncka - January 05, 2021 at 09:35 AM

NA

“Madame” was truly an original, one of a kind lady to know. A strong woman, but always ready to have some fun, giggle and talk about girly stuff. The world is now a quieter place.
My condolences.

nancy - January 04, 2021 at 11:32 PM

PT

“ Sorry to hear of your Mom’s passing. She was my seat mate at a MOW event. She complimented me on my dress and wanted to know all about it. We had great conversation throughout dinner. She did tell me she was a farm girl at heart ❤️ Lovely graceful lady. May her memory bring you joy and peace.
Pam Troia

Pamela Troia - January 04, 2021 at 08:28 PM



“ Our deepest condolences to Jim and Monica for the loss of the mother and mother-in-law. My husband and I had a privilege to meet Marlene when Jim and Monica invited us for lunch to the club. It was such a lovely day, way before covid, and we shared food, stories, memories and plans. She will be missed, not only by her family, but also by many friends, like us. Beata & Zenek Obydzinski



Beata Obydzinski - January 04, 2021 at 06:55 PM

MN

“ *Many fond memories with Marlene.*

Remember going along to taking her to plane for trip she had won. Remember how great she looked in outfit she had sewed for 4H.

After she moved to CA, we talked a lot on the phone. She came back to visit a couple of times, one when my sister was dying with cancer. She had Alton along & took pictures of us all but they did not turn out. She was very good at taking care of her younger brothers ,took them on trips & to visit special places. Once, when Arliegh was still living, we all went to Fremont Days together. She always liked to take pictures at family gatherings and was very interested in ancestry.

She came to visit several times when I was still in my house in Fremont and my mom was living with me. A couple times she surprised me by bringing food so we could eat and together when I got off work at Schwesers. She also entertained me at her old home near Yutan and once at Alton's apartment. I also had the 2 of them at my house for meals.

She had a lot of trouble with her back, and I remember visiting her when she was in a full body brace. She came to visit me in Omaha when I had sinus surgery. When she was late living in Omaha at the Immanuel home, I picked her up and we went to restaurants together.

She was definitely my closest cousin, and I will miss her very much.
Myrtle Nygren



Myrtle Nygren - January 04, 2021 at 05:30 PM