



## Jean Delores Jones

March 7, 1930 - November 4, 2016

Jean Delores Jones passed away on Friday, November 4, 2016, at the age of 86, after a series of infections and a fall that resulted in a broken hip and a series of complications.

She was born Jean Delores Leischner on March 7, 1930, in Wessington Springs, South Dakota. She would never forget watching her father Ed, a creative and capable businessman, struggle to squeeze what money he could out of the depression economy, while her beloved mother Esther raised chickens and bushels of vegetables to feed her five children, Rella, Gladys, Jean, Dale, and Betty. Jean often mentioned the poverty of her childhood, but the stories of bare feet and country simplicity, of a tomboy more likely to climb a tree than bake a cake, always implied the warm cocoon of a loving family. As a child, Jean knew love and acceptance, and she would hold her parents and siblings close to her heart for the rest of her life.

As a school girl, Jean was active in sports. She was a cheerleader who played the trumpet in the school band and sang in choruses at school and church. After graduating from Wessington Springs High School, she attended a business school in Mitchell, South Dakota, and then worked for two years as quite possibly the youngest deputy auditor in the history of Jerauld County. But Jean wasn't satisfied with small town life. After hearing her oldest sister describe life in Southern California, she left home with one girlfriend in 1950 and met up with two others in Long Beach, where they shared an apartment across a palm-tree-lined boulevard from the ocean. Jean and her girlfriends

enjoyed three years as attractive single women living in the middle of LA's golden age, wearing the latest fashions, strolling the piers and arcades, and jitterbugging late into the night at clubs in Long Beach and beyond.

Then a blind date changed her life.

Bill Jones was a handsome Long Beach native, a former US Marine and now a Merchant Marine sailor between voyages with a temporary job unloading oil tankers in San Pedro. Their attraction was immediate, mutual, and irresistible. He never returned to sea, and she never returned to the single life. After dating for a year, they married, bought a fresh new tract home, and conceived their first son, Billy, followed by Kevin two years later.

As parents, Jean and Bill found their true calling. Like many in their generation, they doted on their children as they made a life in Lakewood, a Los Angeles suburb of quiet streets, hazy skies, wading pools, and backyard lemon trees.

Then one morning Bill found himself stuck once more in the famous LA morning traffic, unable to even predict when he might actually arrive at work. It was the final straw. He could no longer stand the uncertainty of his daily commute, and he convinced Jean they needed to escape. They chose the wild and beautiful area surrounding Lake Shasta, north of Redding, California, where they bought eleven acres of mountainous terrain at the end of five miles of single-lane dirt road. Billy remembers seeing the property for the first time at the age of five, through the windshield of a beat-up VW bug belonging to their soon-to-be neighbor, after bouncing up a steep double-track between scrub oaks.

Over the months that followed, Bill and Jean built a cinder block water tank, laid black pipe a half mile down a brush-choked draw to the neighbor's spring-fed pond, installed a pump, and proceeded to build a "Lincoln Log" kit home on the only level spot on the property. Billy and Kevin played with toy trucks in the dirt while Bill and Jean, with occasional help from visiting family and friends, built forms for the concrete foundation of the house, stacked log walls, and hoisted the beams for the second story roof. The new house had a

stunning view——range after range of oak-and-evergreen-covered hills fading to blue in the distance——and a steep, freshly cut dirt road that would regularly test the patience and resolve of the young pioneers.

Those who knew Jean well knew she could be cantankerous. As a mother, her love was fierce and indomitable. Her son Billy remembers one night when he was nine or ten years old. Jean heard a bear rustling through the trash barrel behind the house. She stepped outside into the dark without her eyeglasses and stomped straight towards the marauder, banging a pot with a heavy spoon and growling in a voice like the devil's, "Get the heck out of here!" As far as anyone knows, the bear never returned.

Kevin recalls another time when he and his mother encountered a six-foot rattlesnake with 14 segments in its tail. Mom reacted quickly, dispatching the snake by severing its head with a garden hoe.

Jean could be a force to be reckoned with.

The couple's adventure came to an end five years later, when Jean learned her beloved mother was dying of breast cancer in South Dakota. California was too far away, and she and Bill decided to move their family to Colorado in 1967.

After three years in the suburb of Broomfield, northwest of Denver, Bill and Jean purchased two acres near the Poudre River outside Fort Collins, where they had a custom home built in a grove of enormous cottonwoods and settled in for good.

They had many good years in Fort Collins, as their sons grew up and started lives of their own. They enjoyed the fruits of their labors by traveling to Paris, Switzerland, Italy, Ireland, England, Hawaii, and the Cayman Islands, as well as numerous trips around the US, especially to the Oregon coast. Sadly, Bill had a weak heart and died at the age of 66. Jean bravely bore a grief that remained with her for the rest of her life.

But she found joy in her grandchildren, Billy's sons Ben and Nick. Ben stayed close to her and helped her maintain her home. She and Billy enjoyed weekly

lunches together, and she maintained relationships with other friends, including neighbors Emmett and Aloha Weiss and Dick Anderson, all of whom were ready to offer a hand whenever she needed it.

When Jean grew aware that death was not far away, she told family that she had lived a full and wonderful life. She looked forward to seeing her beloved husband, her mother, and others after death, and she passed into that great mystery knowing she was loved, and that she would live on in the hearts and minds of her family and friends.

# Previous Events

## Memorial Mass

NOV **14**. 9:30 AM - 12:00 PM (MT)

St. John XXIII  
1220 University Ave  
Fort Collins, CO 80521

# Tribute Wall



“ *Jean Delores Jones*

October 25, 2022 at 06:14 PM



“ *Brother Dale and wife Anita and Kelly, Kristy and purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of Jean Delores Jones.*



**Brother Dale and wife Anita and Kelly, Kristy and** - November 11, 2016 at 12:40 PM



“ *My sister, Jean and I went hiking in the Hills at Wessington Springs, before she moved to California. After she moved there, I remember going to the beach and the Pike with the roller coaster over the ocean. When Jean and Bill where on their honeymoon I rode back to California with them and we had a great time. In recent years we would keep in touch by phone and I would go to Ft. Collins and stay with her and have some good times and visits. I loved my sister, Jean and will miss her. My prayers are up for her sons Billy and Kevin. I will miss her.*

**Dale Leischner** - November 11, 2016 at 11:18 AM



*I want to add son, Kirk for the flowers.*

**Dale leischner** - November 12, 2016 at 10:20 PM



*I want to include my son Kirk Leischner in the memorial flowers.*

**Dale Leischner** - November 13, 2016 at 05:21 PM

GL

“ Gladys, Randy & Linda, Deb & Dale, Jeff & Laura purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of Jean Delores Jones.



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**Gladys, Randy & Linda, Deb & Dale, Jeff & Laura** - November 11, 2016 at 09:43 AM