



Helen Ciabattoni

February 22, 1924 - August 24, 2017

Helen (Sokol) Ciabattoni, devoted wife and loving mother, passed away peacefully on August 24, 2017. Helen was born on February 22, 1924, in Reading, Pennsylvania. In her youth, Helen was a star athlete, excelling in swimming, softball and basketball. She was one of the premier swimmers in Pennsylvania during the late 1930's and early '40s. In 1945, Helen married Orlando "Londi" Ciabattoni, a marriage that lasted 71 years until his death in 2016. The newlyweds drove out to Santa Maria, California, in their new Chevy convertible (?) to begin their life together on the west coast. Helen worked as a secretary and dispatcher for the California Highway Patrol in Santa Maria until 1949, when she and Londi moved to Santa Barbara after she was offered a position in the Santa Barbara CHP office. Helen's work in public service included the UCSB police department, SB county fire department and the jury commissioners office, as well as the Santa Barbara YMCA and SBCC Adult Education. Helen adeptly balanced her work, athletic and home life. She raised three children while continuing to participate in competitive sports and recreational activities (?) She was a standout in the CA Senior Olympics program in the 1980's and she traveled with the US Master's Swimmers to compete in Russia and Finland, where she won three gold medals. Helen was the first in many things (?): While at the SB YMCA she initiated the first synchronized swimming classes, taught the first swim classes for 3 - 5 year old children, and was one of the first female lifeguards hired. In addition, Helen received national acclaim for teaching and training Down Syndrome swimmers, which was a precedent setting practice in the 1960's. Her first-born son, Michael, had Down Syndrome, and loved being in the water and swimming.

Helen is predeceased by her husband, Londi, and her son Michael. She is survived by her daughters Karen Ciabattoni and Sally (Ciabattoni) Saenger, her son-in-law Skip Saenger, granddaughter Mahealani and numerous nieces and nephews.

the family would like to thank Dr B and Yolanda for their care and dedication ...

Comments



“ 8 files added to the tribute wall



sally saenger - September 14, 2017 at 10:56 AM