



Katherine Frances Kiernan

February 12, 1942 - July 26, 2019

Katherine Frances Kiernan passed away July 26th, 2019 at age 77 from complications of Alzheimer's Disease. Throughout the 10 years of her debilitating illness, she fought courageously and determinedly. She was a loving daughter, sister, wife, and mother, as well as a gifted artist. Her love of animals and of the beauty of Nature was profound. Katherine had a wonderful joyful spirit that infused everything she did. She will be terribly missed by all who came in contact with her. No one had a more beautiful smile!

Katherine was born in Brooklyn, New York on February 12th, 1942 to Henry and Katherine Kafel. She was the eldest of 3 siblings. She loved piano and at one time considered pursuing a degree in music, but instead attended Marymount Manhattan College and received a Bachelor's Degree in Liberal Arts. However, her love of playing the piano continued throughout her life. During her time in the bachelor's program, she developed a lifelong interest in fine art and history. In fact, it was a graduate degree in American History that she decided to work towards at Hunter College in New York. While she was in the graduate program, she joined the 1964 World's Fair in New York City, where she met her future husband, Ken Kiernan. Theirs was a love-at-first-sight romance and they married shortly thereafter.

Job opportunities for Ken lured them to the other side of the country. They moved to Walnut Creek, CA, where their only child, Kylie, was born. Unfortunately, Kylie was born with a serious medical condition that eventually required a series of surgeries, but Katherine always remained positive and faced all challenges with cheerful determination. After many moves, they finally settled on Santa Barbara, CA. Despite the time that had passed, Katherine was determined to finish her graduate degree. In Santa Barbara, she completed her Master's Degree in American History from Hunter College. She worked for years as an office manager in law and retail business. She taught at Bishop Diego High School, worked for Old Spanish Days and the County Clerk Recorder's Office. While she was there she was inspired to run for County Clerk Recorder. She was always trying to make a positive contribution to her community and the people around her.

When she retired, she and Ken traveled around the country to be near their daughter and son-in-law. It was quite an adventure that encompassed 6 states, but she always faced challenges with a smile on her face. Whether it was taking care of her parents, her

daughter, or helping a complete stranger, she was a loving and caring person. We will all miss her light!

Katherine is survived by her husband, Ken Kiernan; her daughter, Kylie Kershaw (Robert); 2 brothers, Henry Kafel (Carol Prochazka) and John Kafel (Suzanne).

A viewing will be held at Welch-Ryce-Haider Funeral Chapel (15 East Sola Street, Santa Barbara) from 2-4pm on Friday, August 9. A graveside service will take place on Saturday, August 10 at 10am at Calvary Cemetery, 199 North Hope Avenue, Santa Barbara. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to Assisted Hospice Care of Santa Barbara, or the Alzheimer's Association California Central Chapter.

Events

AUG **Viewing** 02:00PM - 04:00PM

9

Welch-Ryce-Haider - Goleta

450 Ward Drive, Santa Barbara, CA, US, 93111

AUG **Graveside Service** 10:00AM

10

Calvary Cemetery

199 North Hope Ave, Santa Barbara, CA, US, 93110

Comments



“ Kylie Dear, I never knew your Mom but can tell from her life story what an incredible woman she was. College Graduate when far less than common! Lifetime true romance! Devotion and care to needy family! And then, a GRADUATE DEGREE in later years. Best of all, YOU are a beautiful reflection of her, and I do know how lovely, compassionate, and what a treasure of a person (and daughter) you are. Knowing in my heart how proud she must be.

With deepest sympathy, Mimi and John Elder and Family

Mimi Applegate Elder - August 29 at 07:45 PM



“ That smile! It was so contagious! She and Ken were the nicest of couples. They were wonderful neighbors only leaving us too soon to follow Kylie and Rob as they moved around the country.
Ken, my sincerest sympathy to you in loosing your beloved soulmate to the 'long good-by.'

Elizabeth Champion - August 07 at 06:37 AM



“ Dear Cousin Katherine, I remember the good times that you, Cousin Robert and I had during our summer teenage years when I would visit Manhattan and Brooklyn, NY. It was an honor to have you as "Maid of Honor" to my wife Kathleen on our wedding day on 30 September 1961. Then Life Happened but we kept in touch through our annual Christmas cards and letters. It was many years later when I got that quirky retirement job inspecting natural gas pipelines that Kathie and I traveled the USA in our RV that we reconnected with you and your wonderful family. We remember Albany, GA; Phoenix, AZ; Eugene, OR and the many visits to Santa Barbara, CA. You will be missed.

God Bless You!!

Ted and Kathie Szelag

Theodore Szelag - August 05 at 12:55 PM



“ To the Memory of Katherine Kiernan, we wish we had met you, or heard you play the piano, you a great mother, as we know your daughter Kylie and Rob and we know how much they loved you. You will be sadly missed. May your memories always be a bright light for your family.

Helen and Richard
Santa Barbara



richard and Helen Sacco - August 03 at 09:51 PM



“ 3 files added to the album memories



Kylie Kershaw - July 30 at 12:41 AM