



## Elva Elaine Wightman Grimmesey

April 5, 1942 - March 17, 2024

Elaine was born in Santa Monica, California on Easter Sunday 1942 to Robert and Elva Wightman. The family lived in Venice and then Mar Vista where she enjoyed a truly happy childhood alongside her big brother Bob, younger sister Connie, and beloved four-legged family members. It was at the age of 10 that Elaine found “Myrtle the Turtle” walking along Wade Street in Mar Vista. She brought Myrtle home and Myrtle continues to live with family in Santa Barbara to this day. Frequent beach outings and summer camping trips to Sequoia and Yosemite National Parks were always filled with adventure and awe at nature’s beauty.

There were many summer car trips to the lovely Midwest town of Cedar Falls, Iowa, where her parents were born and raised. Elaine and her brother Bob and Sister Connie spoke often of what a treat it was to be warmly welcomed by dear grandparents, aunts, uncles and fun-loving cousins. Staying at their mother’s family farm was a treasured experience and produced much laughter, as well as bumps and bruises, all in the name of fun.

Elaine graduated from Venice High School in 1959 and went on to earn her B.A. in Business at Woodbury University in Los Angeles. While attending college, she also worked at Santa Monica City Hall as a secretary to the City Manager. She later worked towards her Master’s Degree in Business Administration at California State University, Northridge.

In 1966, Elaine was hired by IBM as a trainer in various business programs and moved to Las Vegas for this position. It was there she met a handsome fellow IBM employee, Robert Grimesey. An almost whirlwind romance, then marriage, and then two beautiful children, Suzanne and later Robert. The family moved to Santa Barbara in 1975.

Elaine was a devoted mother to Suzanne and Robert. The family enjoyed regular camping trips and day trips locally at El Capitan Beach, as well as annually in Yosemite and surrounding areas. When Elaine and family moved from Las Vegas to Santa Barbara, they began annually attending summer Family Camp at Calvin Crest, near Yosemite, as a way to maintain church friendships from Las Vegas. Suzanne and Robert continued to attend camp at Calvin Crest for many years, and still remain involved to this day. Family camping trips continued and evolved to be even more fun with grandchildren to share the long-time family traditions. Elaine loved nature, but especially loved the ocean. From walks on the local Goleta pier, to whale watching, to taking Robert to the beach at a young age to teach him how to surf. Elaine and family loved short trips to San Simeon, finding treasures on the beach with her grandchildren and spending countless hours laughing and having fun together. Other things Elaine loved were animals – raising Suzanne and Robert in a house always filled with multiple pets, her church Family at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church and Sunday dinners where her children and grandchildren would routinely gather.

Elaine was the best birthday party and holiday planner ever. She executed plans for every possible fun birthday that could be imagined, as Suzanne and Robert grew up. As she gained her angel wings on St. Patrick's Day, this was likely the first year that none of her children or grandchildren were served milk that magically turned green when poured, which of course accompanied green eggs and ham.

Elaine was a valued employee at UCSB Student Health, working as an insurance advisor, retiring in 2016 after over 26 years of service. Though she always maintained part time work when Suzanne and Robert were in school, her full-time work began only after Suzanne and Robert completed high school, allowing her to carry roles of PTA President, chaperone for field trips, work in the San Marcos High student store and be a completely devoted Mom.

Elaine was a very beautiful, bright, generous, fun and loving woman, incredible mother and grandmother, and had a beyond great sense of humor. While incredibly saddened by her passing, her family and friends share the fortune of the gift of her love. She leaves behind her daughter Suzanne Grimmesey (Edwin Feliciano), son Robert Grimmesey, sister Connie Buxton (Nigel), brother Robert Wightman, and grandchildren Amanda Olivo (Alvaro), James, Tre, Anna, and Taylor, many loving nieces, nephews and cousins, as well as her devoted little dog Pal.

A celebration of Elaine's life will take place on Friday, April 5 at 12:00 Noon at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church located at 4575 Auhay Drive in Santa Barbara with a reception to follow in the Fellowship Hall. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, VNA Health/Hospice Santa Barbara or the Santa Barbara Humane Society.

# Cemetery Details

## Goleta Cemetery

44 South San Antonio Road  
SANTA BARBARA, CA 93110  
(805) 967-3608

# Previous Events

## Celebration

APR 5. 12:00 PM (PT)

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church  
4575 Auhay Drive  
Santa Barbara, CA 93110  
<http://standrewspcusa.org>