



Helen Louise Leonard

May 27, 1934 - September 21, 2022

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Rocklin, California – Helen Louise Leonard passed away peacefully on September 21, 2022 at the age of 88.

Helen was born in NYC, NY to Swiss Hungarian parents, Rudolph “Rudy” Meader and Ella Louise Meader. Some of her fondest early childhood memories were summers at Swiss Camp with her family in the Catskills where she enjoyed swimming, the outdoors, and social events.

In the 1940s, she and her mother moved to the “Wild West”, Reno, NV. She attended the first graduating class of Reno High School and developed a keen interest in tennis, winning multiple trophies and tournaments statewide, including Nevada State Women’s Singles Championship in 1950 at the age of 16.

Helen attended the University of Nevada, Reno majoring in Physical Education. She embraced college life and enjoyed it to the fullest. She pledged Kappa Alpha Theta, belonged to many clubs, enjoyed skiing on Mt. Rose, and made honor roll.

She married her high school sweetheart and college love, Lester Wallace “Wally” Leonard, on April 14, 1957. Their first years of marriage were spent in Henderson, NV where she taught Physical Education at Basic High School. There, she coached the women’s high school basketball team and was the leader of the highly acclaimed “Desertaires” drill team.

Wally’s career as an engineer eventually lead the family to Stockton,

California. Helen was busy raising their four children and participating in their activities and sporting events. As a family they went on many camping, boating, and fishing trips. She and Wally were avid 49ers fans and attended many games and happened to be seated in the end zone in 1981 to witness firsthand "The Catch".

When their children were grown, Helen returned to her love of education, and taught 3rd grade for many years at Delta Island School in Stockton. After retiring, her love of learning, history, and travel drew she and Wally to become docents at the Haggin Museum in Stockton. She and Wally took many trips, including New Zealand, Australia, Hawaii, Mexico, and they hit the road for months long trip traveling the U.S.

When Wally passed away, Helen moved to the Sacramento-Roseville area to be closer to her daughters, where she enjoyed trips with them to Alaska, Hawaii, and a "discover your roots" tour of Switzerland, Austria and Hungary. In later years, she lived at Eskaton Granite Bay Lodge and thrived on their social activities, participating in choir, daytrips, her beloved Bingo, and the daily "breakfast bunch".

She is survived by daughters Joanne Murray of Novato (husband Ron), and Diane Mothersell of Loomis (husband Steve), and many extended family members. She was preceded in death by her husband of 48 years, Wally, who died at age 70, and her two sons, Danny and Michael.

Helen was dearly loved and will be missed by her family and friends. Funeral services will be held on Monday, October 3rd at 11:00 am in the Evergreen Chapel at Cherokee Memorial Park in Lodi. In lieu of flowers, the family would be honored if donations are made to the Haggin Museum in Stockton www.hagginmuseum.org or to the University of Nevada Alpha Fund for Women Student Athletes www.unr.com

Cemetery Details

Cherokee Memorial Park

HWY 99 at Harney Lane
Lodi, CA 95240

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

OCT 3. 11:00 AM.

Cherokee Memorial Park
Evergreen Chapel
Lodi, CA