

Lois Gilner Gregerson

November 4, 1925 ~ July 23, 2020

A memorial service will be held at Larkin Mortuary Saturday, August 1, 2020 at 11:00 AM. 260 E South Temple, Salt Lake City, Utah 84111.
Due to COVID-19, please make sure to bring a mask and remember social distancing.

A viewing is scheduled at 10:00 AM, prior to the service.

The graveside service will follow at Mt. Olivet Cemetery. 1342 E 500 South, Salt Lake City, Utah 84102

Lois Gilner Gregerson was born November 4, 1925 in Provo, Utah to Florence Mabel Buell Gilner and Clarence Waid Gilner. Lois died peacefully at the age of 94 of late stage dementia, on July 23, 2020 in San Antonio, Texas at the home of her daughter, Susan Gregerson Willing, surrounded by her entire family.

She is survived by two daughters, Kristy Gregerson and Susan Gregerson Willing; grandchildren, Ruth Willing Novotnak (Grant), Grace Willing Brown (Michael), Jonathan Grant Willing (Rebekah), and Julie Kristina Clark; and by one great-grandson, Nicolai Joseph Novotnak.

After Lois was born, her parents moved to Price, Utah for a short time and finally settled in Salt Lake City, Utah. She attended Roosevelt Elementary and East High School (1942). She graduated with a BS degree in Speech from the University of Utah in 1947. Lois taught part-time at the University of Utah in 1949 during the Summer and Fall Semesters. She married Grant Seelinger Gregerson in 1949 (divorced 1974). Shortly after her marriage, she and Grant moved to Palo Alto, CA where she began graduate work at the University of California, Berkeley while Grant obtained a physical therapy degree from Stanford. She taught physical education at Stanford University from 1949-1950. She and Grant subsequently returned to Salt Lake City, Utah in 1950. Lois resumed teaching physical education at the University of Utah from 1950-1952. She graduated with a Master's degree from the University of Utah in 1954 in Physical Education and Recreation. Her master's thesis was "A Study of Synchronized Swimming in Universities in the Western States". After daughters Kristy and Susan were born, Lois taught evening swimming classes and synchronized swimming for the University of Utah's Department of Continuing Education from 1952 to 1978. As a funny side-note, when Lois taught at the U of U every Tuesday night, the Carol Burnett TV show coincidentally was aired at the same time. Grant told his daughters that their mom was really Carol Burnett! They did have a striking resemblance at that time!

It was once said that Lois probably taught every child in Salt Lake to swim. In summers, she taught group swim lessons at many residences in Salt Lake. She gave swim lessons and coached swim teams and synchronized swimming teams at the University of Utah, Deseret Gym, YWCA, at a private country club (Evergreen Swim Club), and public pools (Liberty Park; Fairmont Park).

After her divorce in 1974, Lois moved to her beloved apartment that had an expansive balcony. She could see south, west and north Salt Lake. She took pride in decorating it with pictures of family and mementoes from her worldwide travels. Every spring, she would uncover her balcony furniture and plant beautiful flowers in large pots.

Lois was active in the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) holding leadership positions at the state and national level for 6 years. She was a delegate to the U.S. Olympic Committee in 1978. She was a national synchronized swimming judge and also a diving judge. As the Intermountain AAU Synchronized Swimming Chairman in 1966, she coordinated the Indoor National Synchronized Swimming Championships for over 200 swimmers at the Deseret Gym in Salt Lake. She was actively involved with synchronized swimming for 25 years.

She was involved in the Junior Chamber of Commerce for ten years beginning in 1957, served as PTA President of Beacon Heights Elementary 1960-1961, and worked as a volunteer for the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City. She loved meeting new people through two social clubs, the Anchor Club and the Newcomers Club. These promoted friendships and shared interests in Salt Lake.

It seemed like there was never a sport that Lois did not like. During high school and college, she competitively swam and did synchronized swimming. In the 1949 Lois competed in the duet event in the Senior Synchronized Swimming Nationals held in Chicago. She loved skiing as well. She reminisced often of the time during the 1940's that she skied "over the pass" from Brighton Ski Resort to the "hot pots" in Midway by full moon using seal skins that were attached to her skis for traction going uphill. At the U of U, she also played field hockey. She began ice skating in the early 1960's and was working her way through the different levels of ice dancing when she fell and broke her knee cap.

However, it was Lois' passion for ballroom dance that carried throughout her life. She and her husband, Grant, would go dancing on Saturday nights. She later began dancing at Ballroom Utah Dance Studio. Lois loved going every Friday to the studio's evening dance party with friends and took private dance lessons every Monday with Matthew Rice. Her enthusiasm for dance was so profound that she went on many dance cruises, sometimes dancing 30 hours per week! She danced in ballroom dance competitions even as recently as 2016 when she took first place in her age division (90's)! She continued to take private dance lessons and danced three times per week after she moved to San Antonio at Aston's Ballroom Dance Studio with Aston Stevenson until March 5, 2020 when she was no longer allowed to dance due to the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions. Although she had dementia, her long-term muscle memory would dominate and she would follow her instructor in waltz, fox trot, cha-cha, tango, rumba, and east coast swing. During the years while living with her daughter, Susan, she loved watching CDs of international ballroom dance competitions.

Lois loved to travel and became a travel agent in 1972, a career that spanned 40 years. In 2012 she retired from the travel industry at 86 years old! She was an enthusiastic and experienced travel agent. Lois made it a priority to attend and complete programs at several travel schools and throughout the years she would take as many "fam" trips as possible to continue educating herself on travel packages and cruises. This allowed her to provide the best service to her clients as well as to save her clients time and money. She actually sailed on or inspected over 200 cruise ships as this was her true niche. She received and kept many, many cards and letters of thanks from satisfied leisure travelers and large corporate/commercial clients with wonderful sentiments and accolades. Her corporate clients included American Bell Telephone (AT&T), Wheeler Machinery, and FMC. She coordinated domestic and international travel for many groups and organizations such as the Utah Symphony Orchestra, the Lions Clubs, the Shriners, the State of Utah's Division of Industrial Development, the Shaklee Company, the National Junior Olympics, the Air Traffic Conference of America, the National AAU synchronized swimming, the Junior Olympics, and the local Furniture Dealers Association. She authored and appeared in many travel magazine photos and articles. She corresponded with United Airlines, Delta Airlines, Hughes Airwest, Braniff International, Texas International Airlines, Frontier Airlines, and the U.S. Congress in Washington DC to advocate for travelers and to provide input into laws and rules that regulated travel. Lois had a wide net of connections in the world of travel.

She fell on ice during the horrific Salt Lake City ice storm of January 24, 2013 and broke her shoulder and hip. Because she needed intensive rehabilitation and care, and because she showed signs of early dementia at that

time, we moved her to San Antonio, Texas. This was a very difficult move for her to leave her friends, her dancing in Salt Lake, and her beloved apartment. Her daughter, Susan and her dear husband, John, took care of Lois in their home in San Antonio. They even built her a beautiful living room and bedroom on their house so they could lovingly attend to Lois daily. They gave her the best quality of life any mother could desire.

Lois was an amazing woman who lived a full and exciting life! She was the life of the party and was always ready to go on an adventure. Her family was the most important part of her life. As her daughters grew up, she never missed a swim competition, ice skating event, or school function. She continued this as she supported each of her grandchildren's activities and accomplishments. She was grateful to attend the college graduation of each of them. She influenced her grandchildren with a desire to pursue education and travel, but most importantly to value family relationships and time together. She will be dearly missed by family and friends, and will be remembered for her beautiful smile and her zest for life as she truly made the most of every day.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Best Friends Animal Society in Utah at https://bestfriends.org/ or to The Gideons International at https://www.gideons.org/.