

LaRue Sloan

June 14, 1925 ~ April 18, 2021

Born in Salt Lake City on Flag Day, June 14th, 1925 to Frederick Leroy Olsen and Edna Elinora Larsen, LaRue passed peacefully from natural causes on April 18, 2021.

LaRue was the “caboose” of 6 children—born 7 years after her next oldest sibling Anona. She was 2 years old when her father died, and her mother—“momma”—succumbed to cancer a few months after her 14th birthday. She vividly remembered the family meeting where it was decided she would continue to live in the family home near West High School with her brothers, Earl and Lloyd, who were frequently out of town on shifts with the Union Pacific Railroad.

Despite little to no adult supervision, she became independent and conscientious from a very tender age, excelling at West High in drama, English and the saber team. (It shocks the imagination to think of LaRue picking up a sword, let alone swashbuckling it around!) In one class she met and befriended the ROTC officer sitting right behind her—Scott Sloan. Although initially convinced that they were destined to be “friends only,” Scott persisted and after attending several “Cadet Hops,” things started to click.

Graduating from high school at 16, LaRue attended the University of Utah where she pledged Alpha Phi—and continued to date Scott who was a Pi Kapp. She excelled at the U, graduating Phi Beta Kappa, with a degree in elementary education.

LaRue loved big band music, Judy Garland, and most of all—Nat King Cole. She and Scott got to see and listen to him from about fifteen feet away at the Terrace ballroom one night. She owned every album he produced.

The couple married in May of 1948, and lived in Logan, Idaho Falls, and in Michigan where Scott trained for his job with Firestone. One of LaRue’s career highlights was working as a supervisor at AT&T where she made lifelong friends with some of the area’s most outstanding women. (This was back in the day when calls were connected manually on a switchboard, and customers shared party lines.)

After eight frustrating years trying to create a family, Scott and LaRue adopted Brent, Holly, and then Mark.

They raised their family on the upper avenues in Salt Lake City, and spent most of their free time in the summers with the Richs and other friends boating at Pineview, Bear Lake, and Lake Powell. Although she could barely swim at all, LaRue donned a red polka-dotted wetsuit, flowered bathing cap, life-belt and flesh-colored nose plugs and forced herself—shrieking “ooh, ooh, ooh”—into the cold water at Pineview where she learned to slalom on an enormously wide pink ski.

In 1963, while watching our white TV perched on the fridge, she watched in horror as Walter Cronkite announced that JFK had been shot. Mom’s politics ran to the left, and she loved JFK. Nixon—not so much.

Several summer work assignments for Scott with the IRS in California led to wonderful family experiences. A special one was when the family rented a home on a waterway in the San Francisco bay, and the kids, to her horror, were rescued by a Coast Guard hovercraft while sailing.

LaRue was active in her ward, serving as a Young Women's leader, and in the Relief Society Presidency. She served as the PTA president and was a member of the Daughters of Utah Pioneers—where she would proudly explain that her grandmother came across the plains as a Mormon pioneer.

She loved Lucile Ball (probably having memorized every episode) and Carol Burnett, enjoying re-run episodes up until her death.

Grammy communicated love by providing great food. She was a great cook, especially with chocolate chip cookies and ginger snaps. She used the same recipe as everyone else, but somehow, they always tasted better. For kids' birthday cakes she would insert coins in the batter—dutifully wrapped in tin foil. Something as simple as packing a lunch became an art form. Every food group was represented, with every sandwich lovingly prepared, covered in wax paper, and taped shut. The paper bag was folded "just so" with the child's name carefully written on the front.

LaRue was perhaps the nicest individual any of us has ever met. To call her an "angel" would be like calling the Sistine Chapel "pretty." She was simply wired differently. Not only would she never say anything negative about another—she would never think it.

LaRue loved people and they loved her. This led to her developing dozens of deep, lasting friendships from different phases of her life.

LaRue was preceded in death by her parents, husband Scott, sisters Leah and Anona, brothers Elden, Lloyd, and Earl. She is survived by children Brent (Shauna), Holly (Colby), Mark, and grandchildren: Scott (Sarah), Chelsea (Jeff), Sierra (Jake), Brighton, Summer (Aaron), Sasha, and Weston.

The family is particularly grateful for the loving service rendered to LaRue by Heather, Marylou, El, Karla, Tatiana and Ariana.

A viewing will be held at Larkin Mortuary (260 E South Temple, Salt Lake City) on Thursday, April 22, 2021 from 6-8 pm. A graveside service will be held at the Northwest Corner of the Salt Lake Cemetery (off of 11th Ave.) at noon on Friday, April 23, 2021. Seating is limited, so please bring a garden or camp chair. For those who wish to view the video recording of the services, please click here:
https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/rscJK55KL8yqpigBxnN_R9xzlB8cdEi9-D6OVGaInEZxeL0uNq3DChJB_broy95a.bnbnP
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In lieu of flowers, please make a donation to your favorite charity.