



Audrey Tjepkema Thorsen

October 23, 1927 - March 26, 2019

Audrey Tjepkema Thorsen was born on Oct. 23, 1927 in Zeeland, MI, a town founded by Dutch immigrants. She was extremely proud of her Friese Dutch roots. She was one of 6 children born to her parents Andrew Tjepkema and Edith DeRoo Tjepkema. As a young girl, impacted by the Depression, she was entrepreneurial and started to save money to fulfill her dream of going to college. Her jobs included picking up apples for the cider press, delivering the Grand Rapids Herald newspaper with her younger sister on their bicycles, doing piece work sanding for the Howard Miller Clock company, and raising chicks that her older brother brought from his hatchery. She graduated from Zeeland High School in 1945 and maintained life-long friendships with her classmates. She attended Spring Arbor Junior College, Spring Arbor, MI, and became the secretary to the college president. Upon graduation from Spring Arbor, she ventured out to Seattle Pacific University and graduated in 1951 with a nursing degree. At Seattle Pacific, she met her future husband, Andy Thorsen, from Turlock, CA, and they married in Zeeland in 1952. Andy was part of the family business, Thorsen's Plumbing. Their honeymoon was driving west a new company truck that Andy had picked up in Chicago. They established their home on W. Olive St., where they raised their two daughters Marilyn and Karen. They were married for 38 years until Andy's death in 1990. At the age of 75, Audrey left the family home and moved to Covenant Village of Turlock, where she enjoyed living a full life and making many new friends. She reveled in being Mormor (mother's mother) to her three grandchildren,

Andrew, Aaron & Julianna. Through the years, she was an active and loving presence in their lives.

Audrey worked briefly at Emanuel Hospital as a nurse until her daughters were born. She then devoted her skills to church and volunteer activities. A woman of faith, she was a life-long Free Methodist, and held various leadership positions at the national, regional conference and local level. She was very active in children's programs and camping, she directed the regional Women's Retreat for 10 years, and for the past 26 years, she was director of regional SCAMPS (Senior Citizens Are Marvelous People). She always worked to create activities and events that made people feel welcomed and included. She purchased a van 20 years ago so she could transport more people to events and outings. In 2008, at the age of 81, she was selected as the Melon Carnival Queen as part of the Turlock Centennial celebration. She concluded her application for Melon Queen saying, "I believe I qualify for Melon Carnival Queen because...I desire to demonstrate that seniors have a very large part in making the world go around." She loved to have fun, and invited people to join her.

Audrey loved to organize and lead – be it family reunions, Super Bowl parties at Covenant Village, or gatherings of friends and classmates. She had many lifelong friends at home and in distant places because of her writing, emailing and calling. She loved adventure and traveling to visit family and friends, including her sister who lived in Taiwan and Hong Kong for many years. She made two volunteer mission trips to Africa when she was in her 80s. She always delighted when people guessed her to be years younger than she was due to her vitality and good health.

Audrey is predeceased by her loving husband, Andy R. Thorsen, her parents Andy & Edith Tjepkema, her sister Erma Carlson, and her brothers, Vernon, Harold & Andy Jr. Tjepkema. She is survived by her sister Leone Taylor of Chicago, IL, her daughters Marilyn (Michael) Glinskas of Modesto, CA, and Karen (Douglas) Hamilton of Seattle, WA, and her grandchildren Andrew Hamilton, Aaron Hamilton and Julianna Glinskas.

Visitation will be held from 6 to 8 p.m. on Friday, April 5, 2019, at Turlock Funeral Home, 425 N. Soderquist Rd., Turlock. A funeral service will be held at 3:30 p.m. on Saturday, April 6, 2019, at Turlock Free Methodist Church, 2006 E. Tuolumne Rd., Turlock, immediately followed by a reception dinner in the church fellowship hall. Private interment will be held for the family.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests a donation to the SCAMPS program of the Sierra Pacific Conference. Make checks out to SCAMPS c/o Margaret Nelson, Treasurer, 600 Lockwood Ln., Scotts Valley, CA 95066.

Cemetery Details

Turlock Memorial Park

575 N. Soderquist Rd.
Turlock, CA 95380
(209) 632-9111
<http://turlockmemorialpark.com>

Previous Events

Visitation

APR 5. 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (PT)

Turlock Funeral Home
425 North Soderquist Road
Turlock, CA 95381
(209) 632-9111
<https://turlockfuneralhome.com>

Funeral Service

APR 6. 3:30 PM - 4:30 PM (PT)

Turlock Free Methodist Church
2006 E. Tuolumne Ave.
Turlock, CA

Reception to Follow

APR 6. 4:30 PM - 7:30 PM (PT)

Turlock Free Methodist Church
2006 E. Tuolumne Ave.
Turlock, CA

Tribute Wall



“ *Audrey Tjepkema Thorsen*

January 28, 2023 at 09:01 AM



“ *Simply Chic Mixed Plant Basket was purchased for the family of Audrey Tjepkema Thorsen.*



April 05, 2019 at 12:45 PM