



Goldie Mae Jarrell Farris

November 3, 1927 - July 1, 2017

It is with sadness that we announce the passing of Goldie Mae Farris on July 1, 2017 at the age of 89 in Fresno, California. Goldie passed peacefully with her family present receiving the compassionate and loving care of Hinds Hospice of Fresno and The Windham Assisted Living caregivers after a few months of declining health and terminal cancer.

Goldie is the oldest of six children, born November 3, 1927 to Margaret Noema Naughton Jarrell and Julius Lafayette Jarrell on the "Old Walker" farm in Gainesville, Texas. The family were Texas farmers until their migration to California in the Fall of 1939 amidst the plight of the Dust Bowl Era. The family came to the San Joaquin Valley and the Imperial Valley "following the crops" but eventually settled in the town of Avenal where her father went to work for Standard Oil in the Kettleman Hills oilfields.

Goldie was always an outstanding student with a love for reading and learning which began even before she started school. At the age of five she became interested in her mother's sewing machine and began making doll clothes. She was an accomplished seamstress and tailor sewing beautiful clothes, home goods and gorgeous wedding dresses for her sister, daughter-in-law and daughter. Reading and sewing were always important hobbies for her. Goldie graduated from Avenal High School in 1946 as a life member in the California Scholarship Federation. She was involved in many extra-curricular

activities including sports, student government and plays.

During the Christmas holidays of 1945 she met the love of her life John S. Farris, Jr. home on leave from the Navy. They were married June 23, 1946 following Goldie's graduation from high school. They lived in Avenal, giving birth to three sons and a daughter. In 1957, they moved permanently to Fresno, California where they raised their family.

Goldie had an outstanding and accomplished career working as a PTA volunteer for the advancement of education. She served ten years in the local schools, then six years on the Fresno City Council PTA including two years as president in 1969-70. The PTA Council includes all the public schools in the Fresno Unified School District. From 1970-72 Goldie served as president of the Eleventh District PTA, representing the District PTA on the California State PTA Board of Managers. The district is made up of Fresno, Madera, Mariposa and Merced Counties. Goldie served an additional six years on the state level where she was the state chairman of two national projects. These projects were concerned with improving reading services for children, comprehensive health education in the schools, and teaching parenting to young people. From 1976-78 Goldie was the Vice President of Parent Education on the Board of Directors of the California State PTA. In addition to her work with the PTA Goldie was very involved with the Fresno Council on Child Abuse Prevention. In 2007, she was presented with The Allean Berg Award for Dedicated Services to Child Abuse Prevention. Goldie served many years on the School Attendance Review Board (SARB) at the county level for the Fresno Unified School District. The purpose of SARB is to work collaboratively on developing strategies (prevention, intervention, and enforcement) that will help students improve school attendance and behavior while diverting cases away from the juvenile justice system.

After retirement from her PTA and community involvement Goldie dedicated

her passion to genealogy and tracing her ancestral path. Goldie was exceedingly proud of her Texas Irish Catholic Democrat heritage. She and John enjoyed many “road trips” across the U.S. after his retirement and many specifically to Missouri and Texas researching her family roots and reconnecting with living relatives. She obtained volumes of family information. After John’s passing in 1997 Goldie continued to travel with friends extending her destinations to Alaska and Europe, the highlight being a trip to Ireland and the United Kingdom where she could visit the areas her ancestors called home. After John’s retirement in 1987 John and Goldie moved in 1991 to Santa Maria, CA. Goldie returned to Fresno in 2000 to be near family and friends after John’s passing in 1997. In 2015, she moved to The Windham Senior Living Community.

Goldie possessed a liberal, open minded view of the world believing discrimination and bigotry are terrible evils. She knew firsthand the feeling of discrimination from the stigma and prejudice experienced by the people of Texas and Oklahoma that migrated to California during the Dust Bowl era. She has passed to her family strong values of honesty, integrity and responsible citizenship. Goldie’s often repeated life lessons to her children were “If a thing is worth doing, it is worth doing right” and “finish what you start, otherwise you are wasting a lot of time”. Goldie will be sincerely missed by all that knew and loved her and enjoyed her company often while sharing a glass of wine or a vodka tonic.

Goldie was preceded in death by her husband John S. Farris, Jr. in 1997; son Steve Farris in 2016; parents Noema and Julius Jarrell; brother Horace Jarrell; and sister Nora Lee Jarrell.

Goldie is survived by her sons Keith Farris (Cindy) of Kernersville, North Carolina and David Farris (Debbie) of Goleta, California; daughter Cathy

Curry (Peter) of Encinitas, California; sisters Mary Connelly of Fair Oaks, California and Emma Zahn of Hackettstown, New Jersey; brother Jim Jarrell of Bakersfield, California.

Goldie is also survived by eight grandchildren Kristen Wright of Winston-Salem, NC; Tim Farris of Chapel Hill, NC; Melissa Hunter of Fresno, CA; Galen Farris of Sacramento, CA; Brian Farris of New York, NY; Kevin Farris of Davis, CA; Erin Isaac of Los Angeles, CA; Caitlin Curry of College Station, TX and nine great grandchildren with one more due December 2017.

No formal church ceremony is planned at this time. A private family celebration of life is being planned for a later date.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks if you wish to make a donation in Goldie's honor please consider giving a gift to Hinds Hospice of Fresno (2490 W. Shaw, #101, Fresno, CA 93711 or hindshospice.org) or to Next Step Ministries – assisting victims of domestic violence and their children (PO Box 793, Kernersville, NC 27285 or nextstepdv.org).

Remembered Joy
An Irish Blessing

Don't grieve for me, for now I'm free!
I follow the plan God laid for me.
I saw His face, I heard His call,
I took His hand and left it all...
I could not stay another day,
To love, to laugh, to work or play;
Tasks left undone must stay that way.
And if my parting has left a void,
Then fill it with remembered joy.

A friendship shared, a laugh, a kiss...
Ah yes, these things I, too, shall miss.
My life's been full, I've savored much:
Good times, good friends, a loved-one's touch.
Perhaps my time seemed all too brief-
Don't shorten yours with undue grief.
Be not burdened with tears of sorrow,
Enjoy the sunshine of the morrow.

Tribute Wall



“ *Goldie Mae Jarrell Farris*

September 15, 2022 at 09:34 PM



“ *6 files added to the album Memories Album*



Chapel Of The Light Funeral Home and Mausoleum - July 10, 2017 at 06:03 PM



“ *1 file added to the tribute wall*



Keith Farris - July 03, 2017 at 05:44 PM