



Kiyoko Uyeno

September 8, 1921 - October 18, 2016

Good Afternoon everyone:

My name is Dick Bridy, the husband of Ginny and the Son-in Law of Kiyoko Watanabe Uyeno. On behalf of the family, I want to thank you for attending this service.

When my parents died so young in the early 1980's, she and Dad were there to fill the void with earnest love and respect. When Roy died in 1984, Mom asked me to represent the family and thank everyone for attending Dad's service. ..and here we are today and I have the honor of presenting a eulogy for our Mom. This is the time that allows me on behalf of our family, to express the importance of her life.

Mom had a unique essence about her. She was, what some call a "whole person", she had her strengths, her joys, challenges and achievements. Let's relive some of those moments.

Mom's Strengths were summed up by the phrase, savor the small stuff. My Mother in Law was the backbone of our family, a woman of few words, but when Grandma spoke, we listened and obeyed. Mom encouraged individualism, demanded dedication to family, encouraged higher education, and loyalty to country. She was a hard-working woman who lived a life of personal accountability, work ethic, pride, and persistence. She and Dad learned how one can live well with less, they lived a life where they experienced intense enjoyment in small pleasures that always involved the family. Most of you know that Mom was a huge sports fan of the Fresno State

Bulldogs and the Los Angeles Dodgers. Some of you may not know that Mom, was very athletic- Mom the “Jock”! She played field hockey and tennis in high school; took up golf in her 60s. She and Dad took swimming lessons then dancing lessons later in life.

Earlier this year mom fell and fractured her pelvis, she dragged herself into the house to call Roger. All those years of exercising paid off. From the very first day, she was determined to get back home, which she did, she wanted to walk again without any assistance, not even a cane, which she did, and until her last day, she talked about driving again. She left her family a great legacy: work hard, accomplish what you set out to do and never give up. She encouraged her children to practice the fundamentals of any endeavor, including sports. One day, through the kitchen window, she saw Ginny and Roger attempting to play basketball. Apparently, their skills left a lot to be desired, so out she came to teach them the fundamentals of dribbling and shooting a basketball. Let’s just say that Mom was a better coach than they were players.

Mom’s Joy was her immediate and extended family. She was interred with her family during WWII. Following the war and release from the camp, she married Roy Kenji Uyeno, a decorated Japanese American veteran of the infamous all volunteer, Army 442 Regimental Combat Team that fought in Italy and France so courageously. Mom was the 6th of 7 children: Fujiko-Fuzzy; Hede; Horace, Frank, Hollie; Mom and Shiz. She was close with the Uyeno side of the family with Roy’s siblings, June and Edna. She loved frequent visits by the Tange’s and family gatherings. She always looked forward to the arrival of Uncle Kichi who drove from Sanger every summer to bring a truckload of watermelons, honeydew and cantaloupes. She relished the Watanabe cousins summer outings to Dodger games; the beach, and Pacific Ocean Park.

Speaking of the Dodgers, Mom was a nutty Dodger fan and I was not shy about my dislike for those bums. We had an entertaining battle every baseball season that lasted 44 years. She got back at me one year at the Fresno County Fair. We approached the Mechanical Bull ride and as soon as she saw

the bull, she never said a word but immediately paid for me to ride. I climbed onto the bull with great confidence. Before I knew it, I was flying through the air followed by an unceremonious slam to the ground! Mom got tears in her eyes every time she remembered that opportunity to avenge my unmerciful attack on her beloved Dodgers.

Mom's Challenges was a life of work and working hard with sacrifice. She and Dad were active members of the tight knit Japanese American community in North Fresno and the far reaches of the Valley. Mom was a traditionalist and expected her children to marry suitable Sansei Japanese Americans. Ron broke that mold! Then when Ginny introduced me as "the one", the Momma Bear's protective instincts kicked in, it was "cold" for a while in Fresno despite the 100 degree temperatures. Fortunately for me, Mom and Dad were open minded enough to give me a chance. After many visits to Fresno and several Watanabe family activities in Los Angeles Mom told Ginny "I guess HE is OK, "he will always make sure you have a roof over your head and food to eat, the only thing is that he is not Japanese".

Mom's Achievements were summed up by this inspiration:

Like others of "The Greatest Generation" who lived through the Great Depression, internment, and World War II, Mom and Dad wanted to provide the best possible life for their children. There were no glass ceilings for Mom, she saw what needed to be done to help provide a better life for her family and she did it. She became a working Mom in the late 1950s and had dinner on the table at 6:00 pm sharp every single day without the benefit of automatic rice cookers or microwaves. She served as an active member of the PTA and a Room Mother for her children's classrooms. Mom and Dad were proud of their greatest achievement: a legacy of children, grandchildren, great grandchildren and so many wonderful family members, and friends.

This eulogy is a gift from Mom to each of you. She is hoping that my words will help all of us through the grief of loss that we are experiencing with her passing. Let us take 10-seconds to remember Mom and all of our loved ones

who have passed away and are gone from our arms but not our hearts. Thank you for sharing this wonderful remembrance of an amazing and loving woman, Kiyoko Watanabe Uyeno.

Kiyoko "Koke" Watanabe Uyeno departed on October 18, 2016 at the age of 95. She was born on September 8, 1921 in Gardena, Ca to Genshu & Tomeye Watanabe, Issei immigrants of Japan. She graduated from Narbonne High School in Lomita, Ca. After graduation she began working as a housekeeper. In 1942, during WWII, Koke and her family were interred in Jerome, AK. Following the war, she lived with her sisters in Cincinnati, OH. Here, she met her husband Roy. They married in Cincinnati, and then moved to Fresno in 1948 after the birth of their first son. She worked for Caltrans and retired after 27 years. Koke was also a member of the Fresno Buddhist Church.

Kiyoko was an avid Dodgers and Fresno State Bulldogs fan, where she was a season ticket holder. She enjoyed sewing, knitting and crocheting, reading, exercising, and shouting out the answers to Jeopardy every night. She loved to travel. She made her way through the entire United States, Canada, Europe, and Japan. Her favorite pastime above all, was spending time with her beloved family and friends.

Kiyoko was preceded in death by her parents, husband Roy, six siblings, and Son-in-law Don. She is survived by her 4 children: son Ronald Uyeno and fiancé Mary Gallegos, daughter Virginia Bridy and spouse Dick, son Roger Uyeno, and daughter Gerri Totoian. She is also survived by her 7 grandchildren, 8 great-grandchildren, and several nieces and nephews.

A graveside service will be held Friday, November 4, 2016 at Mountain View Cemetery in Fresno at 2 pm. In lieu of flowers the family asks that donations be made to the Fresno State Bulldog Foundation or your charity of choice.

Cemetery Details

Mountain View Cemetery

Fresno, CA 93728

Previous Events

Graveside Service

NOV 4. 2:00 PM (PT)

Mountain View Cemetery
Fresno, CA 93728

Tribute Wall



“ *Kiyoko Uyeno*

September 15, 2022 at 09:34 PM