



## Kathleen Valdez

October 5, 1948 - September 4, 2018

Born on October 5, 1948, in the small mining town of Brilliant New Mexico, within Colfax County. She was 1 of 14 children of Felix Ortiz and Emma Salazar de Ortiz, 9 daughters and 5 sons, where she was one of the youngest. Working and living in a coal miner community, both Felix and Emma endured harsh conditions where raising children was an extraordinary task. The challenge for warmth was one in particular. There was a reliance on wood burning stoves and stoking of fires throughout the night or late-night visits to the outhouse during cold winters where the hardship to endure the cold was experienced. Throughout this difficult time the love within the family helped one depend on the other for warmth and protection. Shoes were not always available or affordable leaving many soles run down or torn, where a cut of some cardboard was a quick fix, of course this was temporary. Walking to and from school in the snow with just enough warm clothing could not have been easy nor forgettable. However, there were warm memories, those that came from sisterhood and brotherhood set around a small table, warmed with fresh tortillas and fresh meat made possible by loving, dedicated parents who made raising their children their sole purpose in life.

As a child, Kathleen excelled in mathematics and reading during grammar school, and when it came to sports she was never shy of a game of baseball or afraid to get dusty or dirty. From Brilliant, the family moved to Farmington- New Mexico, then to Los Angeles in the 50's where she attended high school and worked part-time at the local fast food restaurant where she would peel countless potatoes hours at a time. After high school she began her career in the workforce working for Import/Export Industries. She began at Barham Import/Export where she was a clerk and made her mark learning the ins and outs of the business. This helped lead her to land a position as a supervisor for many large accounts working for the well-known Schenker Import/Export Company. Here she gained much respect from fellow co-workers as she made a huge impact with her hard work and efforts to help grow the business. She devoted 20 years within this industry all while maintaining her own loving home with husband Pete and children Jason, Jacob and Jennifer.

Before marrying her beloved husband, Pete, they were good friends as teenagers. Pete was acquainted with the Ortiz family through the marriage of his brother and her older sister. The two became friends for a number of years while Pete was in the U.S Army and Kathy was a career woman. Kathy married Pete in May 1979 in Pico Rivera, Ca and became an army wife. Kathy endured long periods of separation from deployments, and training exercises. Kathy traveled with Pete to Columbus, Georgia where he was stationed. Soon after gave birth to her first child Jason. Within a couple years, they would find their family back in California where son Jacob, and daughter Jennifer were born and Pete retired from the Army.

From full time career woman to full time mother, Kathy dedicated her life just as her parents did, teaching virtues of independence, self-reliance, perseverance and dedication. These lessons were taught to her 3 children and later her 2 grandchildren Jennea and Brandon. Kathy's joy came from helping others especially her children when it came to homework, school projects, spending hours in the local library, because in the end she knew it would help shape good study habits. Kathy was the neighborhood supermom, feeding the kids in the neighborhood, driving kids to sporting events, making sure everyone had a ride to and from school. Many of Kathy's moments of joy was to watch her kids succeed in school, leading to each graduating with a University education. Once her Grandchildren were born she was such a devoted "Grammy" from the beginning. She helped raise them with the most patience, caring, nurturing love she knew. While Jennifer and her husband/son-in-law Brandon were at work, Grammy spent each day loving, taking care, and teaching her grand kids how to read and write. Grammy would do anything for her family, and her grandbabies held the key to her heart.

The little free time that Kathy had she would read literature and philosophy, from medical books to romance novels, and of course the Bible, she loved to read. She loved music which included Oldies from the 50's & 60's, Motown, gospel and let's not forget her Elvis Presley. She had a love for horse races and would visit Santa Anita on many occasions. Watching her Los Angeles Lakers, and Anaheim Angels was the best time to see Kathy with her competitive spirit. Kathy was an artist in so many ways where she demonstrated this with sketches and oil paintings. She would watch her tv novellas and make the best homemade salsa. Kathy was well known for her meals she can whip up in the nick of time that would simply smell and taste amazing.

A girl born into a family with very little, but there was a heavy value placed on independence, dedication and loyalty. The lessons she learned early on in life to work hard and to be self sustaining enabled each of her family members to succeed early on in

their professional careers as a matter of personal fulfilment and necessity. This necessity allowed Kathy to be boundless and ambitious and to be successful in any environment. The role of being a mother might have been the most meaningful role of her life as the impact on the lives of her husband, children and grandchildren will live on forever through memory and virtue. In one moment, the strong willed voice could be demanding, but in another moment could be a comfort through the soft voice or touch of a loving mother. Kathy knew how to earn respect through strength of character, but with humility and grace was able to convey her love and warmth through discreet action, without skipping a beat or asking for anything in return.

Lessons and experiences are passed on from one generation to the next. By that, Kathy's spirit will endure and live on forever.

We thank God for blessing us with Kathleen Valdez, a loving wife, mother, and grandmother.

Survived by her husband, Pete Valdez, Sons Jason and Jacob Valdez, Daughter Jennifer Holmes, and Grandchildren, Jennea and Brandon Holmes.

# Cemetery

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**Riverside National  
Cemetery**  
22495 Van Buren Blvd  
Riverside, CA,

# Events

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**SEP** **Visitation** 05:00PM - 07:00PM

**20**

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McCormick & Son Mortuary Chapel  
25002 Moulton Parkway, Laguna Hills, CA, US,  
92637

**SEP** **Funeral Service** 07:00PM

**20**

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McCormick & Son Mortuary Chapel  
25002 Moulton Parkway, Laguna Hills, CA, US,  
92637

**SEP** **Graveside Service** 11:00AM

**21**

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Riverside National Cemetery  
22495 Van Buren Blvd, Riverside, CA, US

# Comments

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“ Peter Valdez lit a candle in memory of Kathleen Valdez



**Peter Valdez** - September 22, 2018 at 07:51 PM

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“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Kathleen Valdez.



September 20, 2018 at 09:29 AM