



Elaine L. Steele, Dec 27, 2019

Description

From Lorraine Steele,

Dear all

News from Berkeley: I am sorry to say that Elaine passed away quite suddenly on December 27th after feeling unwell for less than a day. My wish would be to pick up the phone and share this news personally but for now geography and time zones suggest email is the best way. She was a force of nature and we know that she touched many many peoples lives. We will let you know when we plan a memorial. Feel free to contact any of us via email if we can share anything else that you would like to know. My phone number is at the end of this email. We already have taken great comfort in the words and messages. Please know that we are all grateful for your friendship and support across the years.

My mother had such a wide range of friends that spanned the globe and spanned generations if you know of anyone who would value hearing about Elaine please share the news.

Elaine had a great Christmas with Laurel and Doug and other family and then had been Facetiming all her kids and grandkids throughout the 24th and 25th. On the 26th she had trouble breathing and swallowing and everything was done to ensure her last days were comfortable. And though no one could have imagined she did not have days but really only hours. Less than a day later she was gone. Her last spoken words were, in fact, in her sleep and she said It is time to get ready for a new semester. We assume that is just what she is doing now.

Laurel is in and out of the house and I will arrive on January 9th and stay a week. Please do call at any time 510 549 1557 or drop by.

Of course, we are all still in shock as she seemed invincible. And she was in great spirits. I had just been there in November and although much frailer she was still alert and happy. She had a team of wonderful careers, a great primary care physician Dr Dhanak, a physiotherapist and a wonderful psychiatrist. They adored her and she them.

On a happier note, less than twelve hours after Elaine passed her first great grandchild was born a little girl in Sofia, Bulgaria.

Affectionately,



Lorraine

Elaine was born on July 1, 1920. She was born in Crosby North Dakota. She died on December 27, 2019. She is survived by her four children, seven grandchildren and One great grandchild.

Please feel free to add my email address if you send anything or if that's not appropriate if people do reply would love to hear the reactions. She taught at the American school in Japan in 1952 to 1954. We are reading some wonderful notes that students remember from way back then. When she was married to my father who worked for the State Department as a Cultural affairs officer she taught in Calcutta, in Nagasaki and in Tehran. She loved teaching and her students and would say 'I can't believe I get paid to do what I love.' Thank you for your interest and your Commitment to keep people informed.

Best, Lorraine

P.S. The last time I visited her I was inspired to write this : Mindset, Joy, and my 99 year old Mom I was raised by my single working mom who was a college teacher. She always said 'I am so lucky to get paid to do what I love!' (I feel the same). She continues to influence my life and inspire me. For three years, she has been predominantly bed bound. Her spirit remains unwavering. She teases her physiotherapist and tells him she aims to dance again. She finds pleasure in seeing the lights of San Francisco from her bedroom. She appreciates her team of compassionate carers and thanks them everyday. She knows her good mood and positive outlook has a huge impact on their working environment. My work focusses on encouraging people to see how much the stories they tell themselves influence whether they are flourishing or 'hanging on by their fingernails.' That how they treat those around them is critical for building a culture of warmth, joy and, of course, productivity. When I visit my mom, I marvel at her spirit and determination. She has set a beautiful bar quite high for me both in terms of her years lived, the meaningfulness in how she's lived them and what she has given to others.

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