



Rita D Borja

April 4, 1934 - October 28, 2020

Rita Borja, 86, passed away peacefully on Wednesday, October 28, 2020. She took in and was a caregiver to her children, younger siblings, and cousins. She provided a home full of love and delicious food, making sure guests had plenty to eat, always sending leftovers home with them. She was a caregiver in her work too, as a nurse at St. Rose Hospital for 20+ years.

Rita was born in Barrigada, Guam on April 4, 1934. Her idyllic life was upended in 1941 when the Japanese invaded Guam. Rita's father was in Honolulu working as an aircraft mechanic and spent the entire war not knowing if his family was alive. Rita and her family spent part of the war in a Japanese camp.

After the war, Rita was reunited with her father and they moved to Daly City, California. Rita's mother could not have children naturally, so all her siblings were adopted. In the style of the times, adoptions were open and children in need were taken in by families who had the means. Rita's other siblings were Darrow, Harold, and Josephine.

She met her first husband, James Boudreau, in high school and they married when James was in college. They welcomed Phil into the world in 1960 and Ted in 1962.

Life presented many challenges: Rita became a single mother when Ted was just a baby and the head of the family when both her parents died a few years later. Rita was responsible for raising her two small children as well her siblings, Harold and Josephine.

In 1970, Margaret Butler, Harold's sister, came to live with us. Seeing Rita helping other people inspired Margaret to become a nurse. Rita later took in her nieces, Tracy and Maria DeLeon, when they too needed a home. In 1970, Rita met and married Chet Hansard. Tragically, he was killed in a car crash a few months later.

Many weekends were spent with her best friend and cousin, Connie Flores. Childhood friends in Guam, they survived a strafing while gathering palm fronds during the war, were each other's maid of honor, and remained close for their entire lives.

Ted and Phil's friends came to see Rita as a second mom. They were always welcome for dinner, especially when the grill was fired up. Rita volunteered to take her sons on Boy Scout camping trips, even though she hated driving, and sometimes got her nursing friend, Marie Reichart, to drive in exchange for a nice lunch.

In 1985, Rita married Juan Borja and moved to San Jose. While in San Jose, Rita was a

member of the Santa Teresa Catholic Church. She was a beloved member of the Layette Ministry, who knits, crochets, and quilts baby items for families in need.

Juan and Rita moved to Magalia in 2016 but lost their home two years later in the Camp Fire. They lived with family for a short while until settling into a new home in Live Oak. Rita enjoyed family holidays, lunch dates, and grocery shopping trips with her son Phil during her last few years. Her family cherishes memories of her kind heart, laughter, and generous meals.

Rita is survived by numerous family members, biological and adoptive: husband, Juan Borja of Live Oak; son Phil Boudreau and wife Valerie Zimmer of West Sacramento; daughter Becky Borja-Sherlock and husband Tom Sherlock of Live Oak; grandsons James Boudreau of Oakland, Theodore, Alex, and Joseph Boudreau of Guam, Joe Sherlock and partner Courtney Cavalli of Marysville, and J.P. and wife Audrey Warlitner of Santa Rosa; and other family members including Sue Boudreau of El Sobrante, Margaret Butler and Dan Dees of Reno, NV and Edna and Joe Torres of Vacaville. Rita was predeceased by her son Ted Boudreau of Guam.

An online mass will be offered for Rita at Santa Teresa Catholic Church in San Jose on November 21st, and recorded on the church YouTube channel <https://bit.ly/3mHtwJB>. Charitable donations in Rita's name may be made to the Santa Teresa Parish Layette Ministry, which provides baby items to families in need, at 794 Calero Avenue, San Jose, CA 95123. Condolences may be sent to 3154 Valley Oak Court, Live Oak, CA 95953.