

## Jean Nadine Sparlin Yarbrough

April 11, 2023



Jean Nadine Sparlin Yarbrough died at her home in Hiouchi, California, April 1, 2023, surrounded by her loving family. Jean was born in Josephine County, Oregon on March 20, 1928, to Lester Lee Sparlin and Ida Mae Hartley Sparlin. She grew up on her family ranch in Williams, Oregon, raising chickens, cows, and baling hay.

Jean graduated from Grants Pass High School in 1946, then attended Southern Oregon College and the University of Oregon. She met James J. Yarbrough at the Greyhound Bus Station in Grants Pass while returning to the university in Eugene where they both were students. The song “Love on a Greyhound Bus” by Kay Kyser was popular at the time. James was a veteran of the U.S. Army Air Corps and prisoner of war whose B-29 was shot down over Tokyo, Japan, in 1945. Jean and James were married at the bride’s parents’ home on Panther Gulch Road in Williams, Oregon, on July 30, 1949. The couple then honeymooned at Patrick Creek Lodge in Del Norte County, California.

They moved to Crescent City, California, in 1949 where James began work as a reporter and editor at the Del Norte TriPLICATE. James became the newspaper’s publisher. Jean and James became partners in Hadley

Newspapers, Inc., which operated three newspapers and a printing plant in Crescent City, Arcata, and Garberville. James preceded Jean in death in 1994.

Jean worked as society editor, photographer, and bookkeeper with James at the newspaper for more than 40 years. Jean is remembered for her “Little Birdie” column which ran weekly in the newspaper. She never left home without her camera and filled the newspaper with many photos of activities in the community. To one long-time family friend, Archie Gargaetas, and to many people in the community, she was “Mrs. Press Photographer”, and the license plate on her car read DN NEWS.

Jean enjoyed a life of community service to her beloved Del Norte County and was active in the Crescent City Women’s Club, Community Assistance League, co-founder with Jacqueline Cochran of the annual 4th of July Deck Party, and many other local organizations. An avid sports fan, Jean cheered on her beloved Oregon Ducks, the San Francisco Giants, 49ers, and the Golden State Warriors.

At home in Hiouchi she enjoyed visiting with neighbors, feeding the deer, stray cats, and the neighbor’s chickens from her favorite spot on the front porch. She loved the Redwood Forest, the beach, California Chardonnay (on ice, please!), a good parade, patriotic music, and traveling with family and friends, especially Shirley and Jim Rainwater and Velma Wadsworth. She was rarely without a camera within reach and took thousands of photos. An avid letter writer, Jean enjoyed sending updates to loved ones from wherever she was.

She is survived by her son, Steven L. Yarbrough (Nancy), her grandchildren Marek A. Yarbrough (Heather), Bridgitt D. Fleming (Scott), Dominic A. Yarbrough (Sarah), Caitlin A. Thurston (John), Molly M. Yarbrough (Nicola), great grandchildren Ronan, Haven, Mia, Hannah, Johnny, and Finn. She leaves behind so many people who loved and cared for her over her lifetime, most especially former daughter-in-law and friend, Bridget Holland, and friends and caregivers Cindy Silva and Karen Tedsen.

Jean requested that no services be held, but that if you are so moved, donations may be made in her memory to the Humboldt Area Foundation, the Del Norte High School Scholarship Foundation for an award in Journalism studies, or to another local charity to continue the work in the community she spent her lifetime supporting.

Jean always ended her notes and cards with a journalist’s flourish by signing off with dash thirty dash. So, we shall honor her by doing the same. -30-

Arrangements are under the direction of Wier’s Mortuary Chapel. Please sign the family’s online guest book at [wiersmortuary.com](http://wiersmortuary.com)