

Doris May Whalen

December 3, 2020



Doris May Whalen passed away peacefully in her home on November 23, 2020 at the age of 94. She was born on May 27, 1926 in Somerville, Massachusetts to Allen and Emma Kennedy. She moved with her family to Long Beach, California when she was fourteen. After high school, Doris attended Long Beach Community College. She transferred to Humboldt State College where she met the handsome Mike Whalen and fell in love. Mike and Doris married on August 28, 1949. Mike was offered a job teaching in Crescent City. Soon after, Doris was hired as a second-grade teacher at Crescent Elk School. In 1950, Doris and Mike welcomed their daughter, Lark, into their family. Doris eventually moved to Del Norte High School where she found her calling with the teens of Del Norte County. In 1967, when Lark was nearly ready to graduate from high school, the family got a big

surprise when Doris found she was having a baby. Even though they were seventeen years apart, Star and Lark had a class together with their mom as the teacher while Doris was pregnant. Star was born in December of 1967. Also, during that year, Doris worked with a group of colleagues to establish the Del Norte Scholarship Foundation to aid the students of the county with college tuition. Doris worked selflessly

on the Foundation for many years and the product of her efforts still benefits our DNHS graduates. Of all her educational accolades, the Scholarship Foundation was the achievement she held most dear. Remarkably, Doris taught for fifty years including the subjects English, Spanish, French, Latin, and Psychology. She positively impacted thousands of students, many of whom, to this day, consider her their favorite teacher. Always a professional, she dressed to the nines at work and maintained the highest academic expectations in the classroom. Above all, she had the gift of connecting with her students by making each feel important and worthy. Long after high school, many students report remembering the vocabulary words she taught them, the Prologue to *The Canterbury Tales*, her greetings at the classroom door, and the coveted “Warm Fuzzy”; earned for improvement or success. When she wasn’t at school, Doris enjoyed her family,

knitting and crocheting, reading, crossword puzzles, and travel. Doris was preceded in death by her husband, Mike Whalen. She is survived by her daughters and sons-in-law Lark and Gary Weston and Star and Danny Blackburn, her grandchildren Hope Weston, Joy Weston Priest, Chase, Cole, and

Bliss Blackburn, great-grandchildren Hazel and Kelly Priest. No services are currently planned; however, a celebration of Doris’ life will be held in healthier times. The family requests that in lieu of flowers, please continue her educational legacy by contributing to the Doris Whalen Scholarship c/o Del Norte Scholarship Foundation, 301 West Washington Blvd. Crescent City, CA 95531.

Arrangements are under the direction of Wier’s Mortuary Chapel.

Please sign the family’s online guest book at wiersmortuary.com