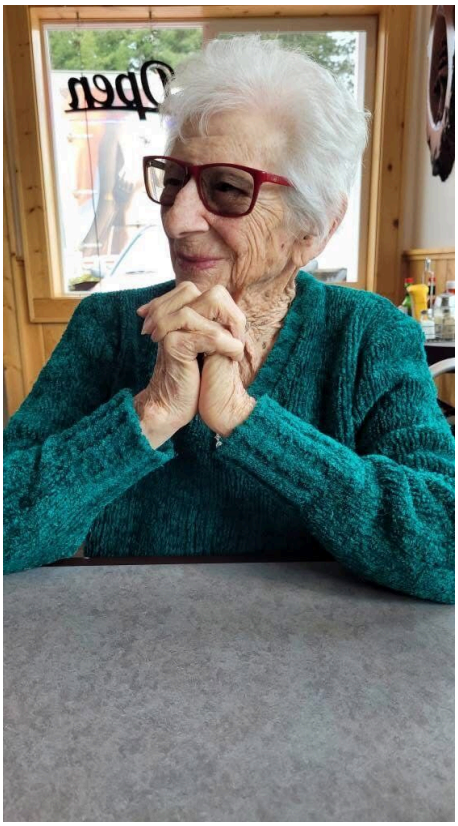
Del Norte Triplicate

OBITUARIES

Mae Pauline Steele

April 25, 2025



Mae Pauline Steele, also affectionately known by friends and family as Maeleen or Padene, embarked on her final journey, leaving the dance floor of life on March 23, 2025, at the victorious age of 99. Maeleen’s story began in Eureka, California, on October 20, 1925, where she entered the world with the same sparkle and pizzazz that she carried throughout her life.

Maeleen's early years in Crannell and Eureka set the stage for a life led with gusto and a love of adventure. She was a student at Crannell Grammar School and later a proud graduate of Arcata High School, where she undoubtedly charmed both teachers and classmates alike. Maeleen became a telephone switchboard operator, connecting people with the same assurance with which she connected her own life's dots. Later, she became a hairstylist in Eureka.

But let's talk about Maeleen's true love: her husband, Chuck. Maeleen and Chuck could dance the jitterbug like nobody's business, their feet barely touching the ground as they danced through life together. Her passion for the jitterbug was matched only by her love of gardening—she could make anything grow. She also loved bowling and golfing and indeed made lifelong friends at the golf course in Hiouchi, California.

Her love for the SF Giants was unrivaled. Even in her elder years, she would stay up for the extra innings and attended some games in San Francisco. As for traveling, Maeleen was always ready for an adventure, whether it was a trip to the grocery store or a jaunt to other countries and islands. Each summer, she treasured her time in the Shasta area with her extended family. Every journey was an amazing memory being made.

Mae's courageous spirit never waned, even in the face of loss. She outlived her beloved husband, Chuck; daughters, Pam Wimer and Julie Howard; and dear sisters, Dinah Reed and June Ann Linebarger. Her optimism continues to shine like a beacon for her surviving son, Bucky Steele; her brother, Wes (Westy) Walch; her grandchildren Weston McBride, Kyler Steele, Brandon Steele, Cindy Kelly, Cathy Christie, and Carol Ringer. She is survived by numerous nieces and nephews, as well as great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren. Her forever friendship with her best friends in life, Kimi Holben, Liz Hoxeng, and Mary Lally Smith, held true to the end.

Those who knew Maeleen would describe her as the embodiment of courage, optimism, selflessness, and love—traits that made her the life of any party and a true friend. Her smile was infectious, her spirit indomitable, and her capacity to love was limitless. She had the rare gift of making every person feel like the most important person in the world, probably because to Maeleen, they were. As we bid farewell to Mae, let us remember the joy she brought into our lives. Picture her now, jitterbugging on the clouds, hair perfectly coiffed, with that mischievous twinkle in her eye, reminding us all to dance through life with a smile, no matter what music is playing.

The Steele family legacy continues through her surviving son, Bucky (Charles) Steele. The legacy of the strength of family continues through her surviving brother, Weston Walch, and the many lives Maeleen touched with her kindness and her unwaveringly loving heart. Maeleen passed away peacefully at age 99 in her home in Hiouchi, California, surrounded by loved ones—a testament to a life well lived and danced to the fullest. Her memory will be etched in our hearts like the perfect score in a bowling game or that hole-in-one on the golf course. While the SF Giants may have lost their biggest fan, heaven has gained one heck of a role model for us all.

Here's to Maeleen, who lived, loved, and laughed like no other. May her story remind us to grab life by the dance shoes and swing to the rhythm of joy, courage, and undying optimism. Curtain call, Maeleen, and take a bow—you've left the audience of life thoroughly dazzled.

Family and friends are grateful to Crescent City Skilled Nursing Facility and Sutter Hospice of Del Norte County for their compassionate care. A Celebration of Life will be held on October 20, 2025, on Mae's 100th birthday.