



Esther May Poling

September 23, 1929 - June 7, 2020

Esther May (Weaver) Poling was born September 23, 1929, in Allen County, Indiana. She grew up on an 80-acre farm, in a white house on a country road with a woodburning stove and a Lilac bush outside her bedroom window. She mended clothes for all ten siblings and milked a cow each morning before the school bus came. Her mother raised her to love music, her family, Jesus and ice cream. Her father passed on to her his passions for gardening, education, and independence. Each night the family took turns reading from the Bible and this gave Esther an early love for reading. She wrote in her journal, "Reading opens the world to you."

The way Esther described her childhood makes it almost easy to forget that she was born at the doorstep of the Great Depression. They worked hard but in the 4th grade, her father fell behind on payments and lost the farm. They worked as sharecroppers, sold vegetables and baked goods at market, and her Dad got a day-job installing home furnaces. By the time Esther was in the 8

th grade, they'd saved enough money to buy their own 20-acre farm with a modest 2 story house. They were people of faith and perseverance who preferred not to talk about the past. Life moved on. The children picked raspberries in the woods and read their books under the shade of a willow tree beside the church. They made fresh ice cream at home every Sunday evening. Her favorite subjects in school included typing, bookkeeping and literature. She also liked math and archery. At 16, Esther took a summer job at Caswell-Runyan Co. cedar chest factory hammering large 2" nails to the outside lids. Across the assembly floor, stood 16-year-old Max Devoe Poling, hammering little tacks on the inside trays. Max seemed to be quickly enamored with young Esther, even coaxing her into a surprise lunch-break meeting to introduce her to his father. It was there in the factory that Max and Esther fell in love. There began a partnership that would last a lifetime and go on for generations. Esther graduated from Huntington township high school in 1947. After graduation, Max left for Wyoming to train as a draftsman for the US Air Force. Esther stayed behind, working as a receptionist and secretary. She was noted for her balanced accounts and impeccable recordkeeping. Max completed his training and returned to marry Esther. They were wed June 26th , 1949, in the First Evangelical United Brethren church of Huntington, Indiana.

The newlyweds then moved to Barksdale Air Force Base in Louisiana. There, they had their first child, Catherine, in 1950. Esther worked at the base's Post Exchange until she was placed in a civil service job at the Finance Office. Max was excelling as a cartographer and technical aid, but they had a different dream for their life. Max was granted Honorable Discharge in 1952 and the young family packed their bags for their next adventure. Next Stop: Purdue University, Lafayette, Indiana.

Esther earned extra money typing thesis papers for PHD candidates while Max earned his bachelor's degree. They enjoyed life as a young family, doing things like taking long walks and attending the annual Homecoming Parade. In 1955, they welcomed their first son, David. Max graduated in 1956 and took a job at Louis Allis, moving the family to Milwaukee. Later that year they celebrated the arrival of their third child, Diana. When Louis Allis offered Max his own sales territory, they jumped at the opportunity.

The now family of 5 packed their bags and headed west to California. Max did well as a salesman and Esther filled-in when the secretary went out sick. The two enjoyed working sideby-side again. Soon, Max and Esther opened their own company refurbishing and selling electric motors. Esther managed the business and finances and they flourished. They moved into the plastics market, began investing and purchasing properties. Esther

established payroll and accounting systems, kept records, prepared reports, outlined budgets and filed taxes. She managed Human Resources by establishing healthcare insurance and retirement plans for employees. Esther even took classes to successfully incorporate the business. Their loving partnership built an empire that will last generations.

In 1961, Max and Esther bought their home on Skyline Drive in Fullerton where they would spend the next 57 years growing with their family. There, they had Thomas in 1961 and finally William in 1963. They were loyal members of the local church and taught their children the value of family and education. They loved art and travel and most of all each other.

In 1975, they opened her home to Mai Nguyen, a young refugee from Viet Nam. Then, in 1979, Zoila Yanes came to Fullerton from El Salvador. Zoila would care for Max and Esther for more than 40 years.

In her later years, Esther explored her humanitarian side. She gave to non-profits, invested in small businesses, and sponsored educations. Esther was an active member of Soroptimist International for more than 30 years. She served the Brea / La Habra chapter in various leadership positions, including a term as President and had a passion for organizing charity.

She traveled the world with her family and had several mighty adventures of her own. In her lifetime she was able to visit all Seven Wonders of the World.

Esther lost her husband, Max, in 2019 and shortly after, began to decline in her own health.

Esther passed away peacefully in her sleep, with family at her side, on Sunday June 7, 2020.

She is survived by five children Catherine, David, Diana, Thomas, and William as well as 9

grandchildren and 6 great grandchildren.

An original poem written by Esther May Poling – The Modern Day Grandma

“Where did the grandma of yesterday go,

The grandma who took all the kids to the show,

Who stopped by to chat, and before we could ask it

Had tackled the laundry that spilled from the basket,

Who offered to mend and to make the girls’ dresses,

And pitched in to help clean up toddlermade messes,

Who came on the run when the kids needed sitting,

And brought along storybooks, cookies and knitting?

Today’s grandma knows how to run a computer.

She watches the market and buys stock that suit her,

She dons an apron for the Soroptimist lunch,

And went on a cruise with the whole Poling Bunch.

She loves ballroom dancing, Brandy, Not Tea.

And Zips around Town in a Red Supra EP.

Grandma’s still here, and there’s no one to match her,

But call before eight, or you simply won’t catch her!”

This is exactly how we remember Esther: as a beautiful balance of faithfully traditional and

fiercely progressive.

Esther believed that Strong Women build Strong Families who build Better Communities for a

Better World. To continue this work, we’d like to request any donations to be directed to the

Soroptimist International's Memorial Fund.

Donations can be made to the Soroptimist International Brea / La Habra
Memorial Fund

Please make checks out to SIBLH with memo line "in honor of Esther Poling"

Mail to: SIBLH - PO Box 521 – Brea, CA 92822-0521.

Cemetery Details

Memory Garden Memorial Park

455 West Central Avenue
Brea, CA 92821
<http://www.memorygarden.com>

Previous Events

Viewing

JUN 13. 12:00 PM - 12:30 PM (PT)

Memory Garden Memorial Park & Mortuary
455 W. Central Ave.
Brea, CA 92821
(714) 529-3961
info@memorygarden.com
<https://www.memorygarden.com/>

Funeral Service

JUN 13. 12:30 PM (PT)

Memory Garden Memorial Park & Mortuary
455 W. Central Ave.
Brea, CA 92821
(714) 529-3961
info@memorygarden.com
<https://www.memorygarden.com/>

Interment

JUN 13 (PT)

Memory Garden Memorial Park
455 West Central Avenue
Brea, CA 92821
<http://www.memorygarden.com>

Tribute Wall

KC

“ Dear Poling Family--

My sincerest condolences on the passing of your amazing Mom, Grandma and Great Grandma. She was so inspiring to me as a Soroptimist member, buisness owner and gracious lady. I just loved her laugh and her kindness. I will make a \$100 donation in her name to Sorotpimist Intl of Brea/La Habra. May God hold you all in His loving arms of peace, love and understanding.

Love, Kathy Campanelli

Kathy Campanelli - June 16, 2020 at 02:51 PM

LH

“ *Thinking of the family and sending you all much Love.*

lynn hughes - June 13, 2020 at 02:53 PM

TS

“ *I didn't really get close to Aunt Esther until after I was married. She was high class, smart, charming, considerate, savvy, hospitable, and witty. The fact that she lived in California made it hard for us to spend vast amounts of time together, but she welcomed us into her home a couple of times for visits and made sure we saw the sights and did the things. I will miss her! California visits will never be the same again! Fly high Aunt Esther! We love you and Uncle Max very much!*



Troy Stephens - June 11, 2020 at 07:43 PM

TS

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Troy Stephens - June 11, 2020 at 07:38 PM

TA

“ So sorry for your loss she was a wonderful woman. She was so good to my dad when I know he felt like the outsider

Teresa Allen - June 11, 2020 at 11:52 AM

KI

“ Katherine, Shena, & Irene purchased the Heavenly Heights Bouquet for the family of Esther May Poling.



Katherine, Shena, & Irene - June 10, 2020 at 08:10 PM

FT

“ From your Apple team purchased the Lavender Reflections Spray for the family of Esther May Poling.



From your Apple team - June 10, 2020 at 07:28 PM