



Stu News Laguna

Stu Saffer's Laguna Beach News and Community Forum



Beloved former Mayor Kathleen Blackburn



Kathleen Diane Blackburn died peacefully on Monday, March 16, 2015. The cause of her death was long-term complications from an automobile accident 34 years ago.

Kathleen grew up in San Marino. When she was twenty years old, she graduated Phi Beta Kappa from University of California at Berkeley and went on to do research at the U.C.L.A Brain Research Institute.

Kathleen met her future husband Bill Blackburn in 8th grade math class. In 1974, they moved to Three Arch Bay. With David and Camron, their two children, they settled into the happy, active life of a young family. Their two children attended Aliso Elementary School where the family made many lifetime friends. She was active in the P.T.A, and she herself played tennis and volleyball and women's soccer. She also coached girls' soccer teams.

When South Laguna began the process of annexation to the City of Laguna Beach, Kathleen became involved in planning efforts, the beginning of a long record of public service. Following this successful annexation, she served on the

City of Laguna Beach Planning Commission. Later, she was elected to two terms on the City Council and also served two terms as Mayor of the City. During her tenure the Orange County Bankruptcy and the City fires presented major challenges. In particular, her term as Mayor during the Millennium was something she considered an honor.

The centerpiece of her Council service, however, was the successful completion of the Montage Laguna Beach. She took pride in its community legacy of free parking, a public park, easy access to the beach, a continuous boost to annual City revenue, and on-going, generous donations to local charities from Hearts of the Montage.

Kathleen was preceded in death by her two children, daughter Camron and son David. She is survived by her husband Bill, her three grandchildren Lauren, Evelyn, and Daniel Blackburn, her sisters Marolyn Peterson, Jacquolyn Sawyer, and Gloria Cormier, and her adopted daughter Paula Vercelli. She also leaves behind many friends who will always remember her for her intelligence, courage, style, and grace as well as her sense of humor.

A very private service for the immediate family will take place. Friends and family are planning a public Celebration of Kathleen's life during the month of May, and details will be forthcoming.

A Memorial Fund is being established at the Laguna Beach Community Foundation. The fund will continue Kathleen's deep concern for people in need in our City. Memorial donations may be made out to the Laguna Beach Community Foundation and designate for Kathleen Blackburn's Laguna Beach Fund, and mailed to: The Laguna Beach Community Foundation, 303 Broadway, Suite 212, Laguna Beach, CA. 92651.