



Loretta Rae Watts

April 17, 1932 - March 28, 2020

Loretta Rae (Melim) Watts was born in Honolulu, Territory of Hawai`i, on Sunday, April 17, 1932. She was the only child of Ida and Raymond Melim. She was raised in Manoa valley where she attended the English Standard schools of Lincoln Elementary, Stevenson Intermediate, and Roosevelt High School. She spent lots of fond times with her maternal grandparents and many cousins who were like brothers and sisters to her.

Once graduated from high school, she attended Woodbury College in Los Angeles. There she met many lifelong friends and made some pocket money dancing hula with a local performing group. Once college was over, Loretta returned to Honolulu where she worked for Alexander & Baldwin as well as Kodak Hawai`i. While at Kodak developing pictures, she met a handsome local boy who caught her eye.

After dating for a while Loretta married John Watts. She found herself immersed in a large loving family full of in-laws, nieces, and nephews who stole her heart. She was their Aunty Lori and she loved each of them dearly. Soon, she added to the bunch and had 5 children of her own. Loretta and John moved to California to pursue his career in the restaurant business where John and 2 associates opened The Riviera Restaurant in San Francisco. Eventually, the islands called them home again and they opened The Branding Iron restaurant in Kamuela. Loretta and John were the first to bring pizza to the little town of Kamuela.

After a divorce, Loretta and her youngest children returned to O`ahu. There she married Merle Watts. She was happy to now be the proud mother of 10 children (Her 5 plus Merle's 5 children – a real life Brady Bunch). Loretta and Merle enjoyed 27 happy years together. During their retirement years they enjoyed cruises, visits to see their grown children and newly arriving grandchildren, and simply spending quality time together. Loretta also began dancing hula again, crocheting and lauhala weaving like a pro, taking ukulele and `olelo Hawai`i lessons and becoming very active in her senior group at Pupukea.

Loretta's treasures include her daughters, Reilee (Bill), Lisa (David), and Janell (George). Her sons Kilo (Nanette), Thomas (Mary), Bill, Michael (Carol), Ian (Gina), George, and Jamie (Jade). Her granddaughters; Jessica (Dan), Kailee (Mark), Bria (Matt), Amber (Johnny), Geralyn, Chesley, Anita, and `Auli`i. Her grandsons; Scott (Ashley-Rose), Kieran, Christopher (Brittney), Halen, Jordan (Aleia), Jacob, Trevor, Ivan (Natalia), Ben, Martin (Janet) and Pono. Her great-grandchildren: J.J., Karter, Calvin, Ethan, and Michael. There are 2 more angel great-grandchildren (Sadie and ...) on the way and we are certain Mom is already cuddling with them.

Whenever we see a humpback whale breaching, a waterfall cascading down the Ko`olau, a rainbow, a brilliant sunset, or a glass ball on the beach, we will think of our mom, Loretta, as she loved these things dearly, but never as dearly as she loved us and each of you.

Services to be held at a later date.

Comments



“ Loretta, how lucky and honored I have been to be able to be a wife to your son Kilo, and to have spent time with you. Each moment of your life that you shared with me in your gentle, kind, funny and loving way; meant the world to me and will never be forgotten. Until my time to join you I will always cherish the drop-in hula class, learning to make Hekka (sp?)Chicken, being “witchy”, and laughing over a morning cup of coffee...and my memories of you that I can share with JJ, Sadie and the future great-grandbaby. Aloha and mahalo Loretta.

Nanette Watts - April 09, 2020 at 08:18 PM