

# Joyce Marie Owens Hall Baxter Fraley

## Obituary

Born May 20, 1928 in Ranger, Texas

Died January 21, 2021 in Tampa, Florida

Who was this lady and how did she live her 92 years?

She was well educated and loved books. She earned a B.A. in English Literature from Cal State Fullerton and a Masters in Elementary Education from the University of Alaska.

She was a terrific first grade teacher, most recently at the Oak Harbor Public Schools on beautiful Whidbey Island, Washington. If you were in first or second grade there, between the years of 1989 and 1994, she may have taught you to read.

She was a faithful and lifelong Christian, worshipping at the South Whidbey Church of Christ and in her later years, at the Oak Harbor Church of Christ, where she could often be found in a Sunday School Classroom or helping with Vacation Bible School. If you were there between 1983 and 2003, she may have taught you to pray and trust the Lord.

She was a wonderful wife and mother. She proved this three times. She married for the first time at age 19 to Alton Hall, who was in the Ministerial Program at Abilene Christian College. Joyce had three children with her first husband, Sharon Hall Porter, of Whidbey Island Washington and Honolulu, Hawaii, Judy Hall Mravle of Tampa, Florida and Charles Allen Hall of Homer, Alaska. One of the many adventures and daring plans she was to become involved with occurred when she and Alton bought an old 1920's schoolhouse in Moreno Valley, California which they totally restored. She lost her first husband in 1972.

In 1973, Joyce married a second time to Major James A. Baxter, US Army, Retired. She lovingly welcomed Jim's four children into her life: Annella, Patricia, James Jr. and Roberta. The second great adventure of Mom's life involved building from the keel up, a beautiful sailboat which they named Gemini. It was completed in the late 80's after seven years of work, and they set sail. Involved in the 100 year storm in Cabo San Lucas, their beautiful creation was pitch poled up onto the sand and left in ruin. They didn't let it get them down. They went on to what they called Plan B. They bought a large motor home and spent many years roaming the country and seeing the sights, Willie Nelson's "On The Road Again" playing on the stereo in the cabin. In 1983, her daughter, Sharon and husband, Dick Porter, asked them to settle down in a beautiful little cabin on Smuggler's Cove Road in Greenbank. They lived on that property for 12 years before moving to Oak Harbor, where Jim died in 2002.

In 2003, after the passing of Louise Fraley and Jim Baxter, Bob Fraley was asked to deliver the Sunday sermon at the South Whidbey Church of Christ. Her daughter, Sharon, sat down at the end of the row next to her mother, Joyce, who leaned over and whispered, "Don't sit there. Bob might want to sit there." Not surprisingly, Joyce and Bob were married soon after at the Oak Harbor Church of Christ. We were pleased for them but privately thought "Wow, they are 75 and 79. Why are they getting married?" How foolish we were. Joyce again welcomed children into her heart with the inclusion of Bob's three daughters, Bobbi, Rita and Debbie. Joyce and Bob continued to serve their church, and love all the children and grandchildren. They took care of each other to the end. Joyce



passed away on the night of January 21st, 2021. They got 17 years of love and laughter and companionship from the big chance they took late in life. If you were fortunate enough to witness this, you would join us all in saying farewell to a great lady. She always voted for love and taught us to give with our whole hearts. But in her book... when it came to love...she would have taught you'd better be married.