



Michele Susan Mondani

JUN 30, 1946 - JUL 24, 2015



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It is with sad hearts that we announce the death of Michele Susan Mondani who passed on the 24th of July, 2015 at the age of 69. Michele was born in San Francisco to Peter and Evelyn Mondani on June 30th 1946. She was the first of their four children. Until the age of 18 she grew up on Robert Place in Millbrae California. She grew up with her two twin sisters, Cindy and Rene and her brother Gregg. Attending Mills High School in Burlingame Michele was always at the top of her class. After leaving Millbrae, Michele started an eight-year higher education career that saw her earn a Ph. D. in Experimental Psychology. Initially she received her M.A. and B. A. degrees from San Jose State in Psychology. Moving on to get her advanced degree, she received her Ph. D. in Experimental Psychology from the University of Colorado. Seeking a career in education Michele first taught at the University of South Florida as a 1-year “Visiting Assistant Professor”. It was there in South Florida that she met the love of her life and husband of 40 years, Richard “Dick” Borden. After her year in Florida was up, she moved on to a more permanent position as an Assistant Professor at the University of Oklahoma and taught there from '74 – '77. One semester after her arrival in Oklahoma, Dick (M.A. degree in hand) transferred there to complete his own Ph.D. studies. Looking to get back to the tranquility of the coast, the now married Michele and Dick headed West on Dick’s graduation day in a U-Haul truck packed with all of their worldly possessions – including Michele’s car. Once back in California, Michele moved on from a career in education and started phase two of her professional career in industry this time. Most of her professional career was focused in Marketing where she used her skills in Behavioral Psychology and Statistics to analyze both consumers and business markets. Initially starting at the Bank of America as a Group Marketing Manager. Taking her learnings from the bank she went on to work at Pacific Bell for the better part of 16 years. While at PacBell she won numerous awards and recognition for such things as



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creating PacBell's health care vertical market business plan from scratch. At the end of her career at PacBell she earned the title of Director of Statistical Research. By this point, Michele and Dick wanted to get closer to the coast and the beach. Upon her leaving telecommunications, she and Dick started their own Independent Marketing Research Consulting firm from their home in Santa Cruz (1½ blocks from the beach). While there is something to be said for being one's own boss and having the freedom to take long morning walks on the beach, there is also something to be said for the security of employer provided health and retirement benefits. Consequently, a year later Michele joined Driscoll Strawberry in Watsonville (a 10 mile commute) which allowed her to reinvent herself in a new industry and Dick opted for a shorter 2-mile commute to the local Santa Cruz community college. There was a lot more to Michele than education and work however, she enjoyed several hobbies. One of her favorite past times was trout fishing, particularly in Burney California. Not only did she love to fish, she was fiercely competitive. Every fishing trip included a bet for who could catch the first fish, the biggest fish and the most fish. If she wasn't in the lead, you weren't leaving the fishing hole! Other places she loved to fish included Robbers Cave in North-East Oklahoma and Lake Thunder Bird near her home in Norman, OK. Once retired, now in the town of Vista California in the County of San Diego, she enjoyed doing "Counted Cross Stitch". Not only did she love to do cross stitch and she created the patterns from scratch. Those patterns were typically made from pictures of the prize-winning orchids that Michele and Dick grew while being a part of the Santa Cruz Orchid Society and from photos of butterflies she found on internet. She loved the beach and the ocean. While in Florida she spent many an afternoon in the surf collecting shells. Once she got towards the end of her professional career she moved to Santa Cruz to be closer to the water and ocean and finally resided in San Diego County with quick access to the beach and the peaceful rhythmic sound of the waves. One of her favorite things to do was walk out on a pier and enjoy a nice seafood dinner. Some of her other favorite enjoyments included gardening when her back would physically allow it. In fact their yard was a living tribute to beautiful plants and nearly a full fledge sanctuary for watching the birds in her yard, particularly humming birds which would surround their 4 feeders. During



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the morning and evening hours you could easily count 20 or more hummingbirds enjoying a feast of sugar water. Michele also loved Football, particularly the 49ers during the mid-80s. However a of late she became a Chargers fan when moving to San Diego, though clearly did not agree with the choices the owner made in player trades of coaching choices! She also enjoyed the sport of politics spending countless hours watching MSNBC and reading newspapers and web articles pertaining to all things political.Perhaps the most important thing in Michele's life was her husband Dick. They were inseparable after being married for 40 years. They always seemed like they were perfect for each other switching between "opposites attract" and "they are so much alike". So many good times were shared by both and always shared together. There was however another love in her life and that was her dog Murphy. Once retired and awaiting Dick's retirement from the local community college, she needed a companion at home. She decided on Murphy with whom she had a special relationship. They were best friends. Murphy is a Shiba Inu and stayed by her side day and night. As a testament to her love and compassion for animals Michele boasts one of the oldest living Canaries that I have ever heard of, his name is Scaper (since he "escaped" from his cage in Santa Cruz on day#1) and he's 19 years old going on 20.Throughout her life she stood tall and was a pillar for her family and friends. She may not of always told you what you wanted to hear, but you knew it was well thought out and likely what needed to be said. With her passing there will a void in all of our lives that will never likely be filled exactly the same way that Michele did.All are welcome to join us for her services to be held on Tuesday August 4th at Skylawn Memorial in San Mateo at the top of Highway 92. The services start with a viewing at 11:30am and 12:00pm start time for the Eulogy. At approximately 1:30pm Michele will be laid to rest next to her Mother and Grandmother in a site with a beautiful view of the ocean.



Tribute Wall

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Mary Carlson posted:

Michele was so much fun. Best friend in High School. So smart and had to be resilient at San Jose State. I am sorry we drifted apart over the years. So happy she had 40 years with Dick. My middle daughter has her name as a middle name. I am in a state off shock right now seeing her obituary. Rest in peace. Love Mary.

August 4 at 4:53 AM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Michele by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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