



Meals on Wheels and Senior Outreach Services

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A HABIT OF GIVING

In January, we received a call from Edie Omeg's family. Edie had participated in our Friendly Visitors program and her family called to tell us that Edie had passed on January 7. They wanted us to know how much her Friendly Visitor volunteers had made a difference in her life and they asked about how family and friends could donate to Meals on Wheels and Senior Outreach Services' Friendly Visitors program in lieu of flowers.

I called Edie's daughter, Pam Shore, and one of her Friendly Visitors, Susan Robins, to learn more about Edie.

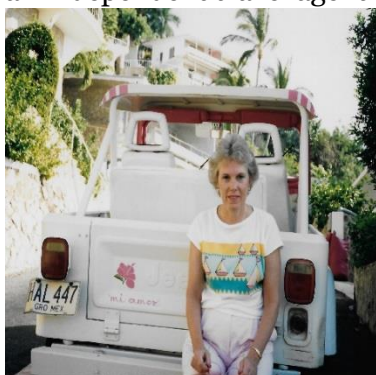
Pam laughed when she talked about her mom. "These days you'd call her a soccer mom but for us, she was the swim team mom. Mom grew up along the Columbia Gorge but she had a terrible fear of water and never learned to swim. So by the time my brothers and I learned to walk, my mom was taking us to swimming lessons. It did not matter if it was cold or rainy, she would take me and my brothers to our swim team practices. She would just beam watching us swim like fish in the water."



Edie and the family

Edie retired in 1996, but "retirement" to Edie meant more time to travel, so she became an independent travel agent to help support her love of traveling. She also educated herself in financial investments and the stock market and was featured on the front page of a Wall Street Journal article about women over 60 learning how to invest!

"Mom was always active. She loved music, singing, studying the bible, gardening and connecting with people. So when she became ill, the Friendly Visitors Program was a real godsend. She became particularly close to Susan Robins. After Mom died, calling Susan was one of the hardest calls I made."



Edie in Mexico, 1998

Susan first met Edie in 2011. The two women were meant to be in each other's lives. Originally from Australia, Susan had made a decision to be more involved with the community and volunteering with Meals on Wheels and Senior Outreach Services' Friendly Visitors program seemed like a great way to give back to the community.

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Susan has vivid memories of their first meeting in February of 2011. “I was looking forward to meeting Edie but I received some devastating news that morning. One of my best friends had just passed. I was very emotional and was tempted to crawl back into bed and cancel my meeting with Edie. Instead I made a decision that meeting Edie was a way to move forward. It was one of the best decisions I ever made. We really connected and talked nonstop.”



Edie “always full of vim and vigor”

For years, Edie and Susan got together every Wednesday and Sunday. After Susan moved to Reno, she and Edie regularly spoke by phone.

“Although her body was failing her, her brain was full of vim and vigor. We could talk for hours. We all have our birth families but Edie was my chosen family. Edie met my children, and when my mother came to visit me from Australia, we visited Edie.”

“On my last visit with Edie a few months ago, she was really there for me. My mother died early in 2016 and my Father was very close to his death and Edie just listened. I brought Edie a white orchid. Usually I brought cut flowers but I wanted Edie’s orchid to have roots that would continue to grow. Now I have that orchid. Edie’s daughter, Pam drove up to Truckee where I live now and brought it to me. But my memories of Edie are rich and I am so thankful to the Friendly Visitors program for introducing the two of us.”



Edie and Susan, December 2016

You can send donations in memory of Edie to the Friendly Visitors program at Meals on Wheels and Senior Outreach Services, 1300 Civic Drive, Walnut Creek, CA. 94596 or online at <http://mowsos.org/donate/>