



Allene Leonetti

August 24, 1922 - January 30, 2015

Allene Leonetti, age 92, passed peacefully after a long and full life on Friday, January 30, 2015.

Allene was born in Navasota, Texas in 1922, to John Salvaggio and Florence Lena (Spadachene) Salvaggio, who were at the time Italian-American grocers in downtown Navasota.

In the late 1920s, John moved the family to the Houston area to farm cotton in Bellaire, a decision that would shape the remainder of Allene's life and teach her the love of plants and gardening that stayed with her for all the decades thereafter. In Houston, she met Frank Leonetti, to whom she was married on January 3, 1942. They honeymooned in San Antonio, and began what they expected to be a quiet life together.

With the outbreak of the Second World War, that quiet life changed radically as Frank was enlisted into the Army Air Corps in 1943 and Allene boarded a train to follow him across America. While the Great Depression had cut short her formal education after the 8th grade, her travels with Frank resumed that education in the classroom of an adventure beyond anything that she previously had imagined possible.

After Frank completed basic training in San Antonio, they moved together to Springfield, Massachusetts, where Frank was stationed as an Air Corps

medic. Allene recounted this time in her marriage with special fondness, because she saw it as an adventure that she shared with Frank, separated out from all that they had known to build a close life in which they depended exclusively on each other. The time that they were in Springfield also allowed them to travel to New York, both to see the city and to get to know the Leonettis of Brooklyn, Frank's father's kinsmen.

Allene made a contribution to the war effort that was uniquely her own when she undertook employment as a manufacturing quality inspector in the Springfield Armory, working on lines that manufactured the M1 Garand.

When Frank was transferred to Colorado Springs, Colorado, Allene moved west with him, and the Rocky Mountains taught them a shared love of the outdoors that became a consistent theme of their subsequent life together. Colorado Springs sparked a love of camping that put them in the hills above Austin for the next three decades.

After the war, Allene and Frank returned to live among their extended family in Houston, and Frank undertook work as an electrician. Being part of a large Italian family meant that "Aunt Allene" was loved by many throughout Houston. Between them, Allene and Frank had a dozen siblings, and they lived in a constellation of their relations, who were mostly concentrated in Houston. Their first child, Barbara, was born in 1947. A son, Michael, was born five years later.

She built a life for her husband and children that centered around their family, her kitchen, and a devoted circle of friends. Allene will be remembered for the way that she cared for the people around her, taking sick and aged relatives into her home, assisting friends and relatives who had fallen on hard times, and cooking. Constantly cooking. Every guest at the door anticipated the smell of freshly-sautéed garlic that permeated her home on Milwaukee. She

entertained, and she made others the center of her life, usually in her kitchen.

She had other passions, and she shared them in ways that transformed the lives of the people who surrounded her. She had a shrewd eye for the unrecognized value of antiques. She loved to garden. And she relished the exercise of a good night of dancing or a fine walk in the outdoors on a sunny afternoon in Houston. She read voraciously, from the Houston Post to the latest novels, and she taught her grandsons the love of books. Looking back on her life, even with 92 years, it is amazing that anyone could live a life so fully.

She is survived by her daughter and son-in-law, Barbara and Ken Mason; grandson Mark Mason and wife Paula; grandson Stephen Mason and wife Diane; six great-grandchildren; daughter-in-law Linda Leonetti and her brother Tony Salvaggio and many loving nephews and nieces. She was preceded in death by parents John and Fannie Salvaggio, husband Frank Leonetti, son, Michael Leonetti, brother Frankie Salvaggio, sister Rosalie Chumley, and brother Lee Salvaggio.

Mark Mason and Stephen Mason will serve as pallbearers, and Tony Salvaggio, Tony Spadachene, Damon Leonetti, Pat Leonetti, Frankie Salvaggio, Duane Debakey will serve as honorary pallbearers.

Services will be held at 12:00 PM on Saturday, February 7th at Dettling Funeral Home, 14094 Memorial Dr. in Houston, with visitation beginning at 10:30 AM. Burial will be at Memorial Oaks Cemetery following the service. Relatives and friends are welcome at Dettling Funeral home after the burial for a brief reception.

For more information about Allene's rich life, visit www.AlleneLeonetti.com.

Cemetery Details

Memorial Oaks Cemetery

13001 Katy Freeway
Houston, TX 77079

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB 7. 10:30 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

Dettling Funeral Home
14094 Memorial Drive
Houston, TX 77079
(281) 497-2121
david@dettlingfuneral.com

Service

FEB 7. 12:00 PM (CT)

Dettling Funeral Home
14094 Memorial Drive
Houston, TX 77079
(281) 497-2121
david@dettlingfuneral.com

Graveside Service

FEB 7. 1:00 PM (CT)

Memorial Oaks Cemetery
13001 Katy Freeway
Houston, TX 77079

Reception

FEB 7. 1:00 PM (CT)

Dettling Funeral Home
14094 Memorial Drive
Houston, TX 77079
(281) 497-2121
david@dettlingfuneral.com

Tribute Wall



“ *Allene Leonetti*

October 08, 2023 at 10:52 AM



“ *Allene Leonetti*

October 06, 2023 at 01:12 AM



“ *Allene Leonetti*

October 05, 2023 at 09:45 AM



“ *Allene Leonetti*

October 05, 2023 at 01:54 AM



“ *I came from Michael Leonetti's facebook page to read the obituary for his beloved grandma, Alene, and what a tribute it was to a life that was obviously richly lived and filled to the brim with love, both generated and received. I can only wish that half such a glowing record of my life will be set down when my time comes to leave this world. My deepest sympathies on such a great loss to all of you.*

Evangeline Thompson



Evangeline Thompson - February 08, 2015 at 11:51 PM

LE

“ Barbara,
As a good friend of mine, I wanted you and your loved ones to know how very sorry I am to hear of your mother’s passing. Mrs. Leonetti was a lovely lady and was always very gracious to me when I visited her home. Love, Lucille Ellis

Lucille Ellis - February 06, 2015 at 10:13 AM

RB

“ I know that my mother, Rosalie Salvaggio Buttecali had the fondness of memories for her cousin Allene. She always spoke of her with affection and how she and her own sister, Nancy were very much alike both in looks and personality. I think at times she felt overwhelmed when they were all together, for Allene and Nancy seemed to have boundless energy. As cousins, they shared their childhoods together in the early years of Houston, before the urban sprawl of today. Although, the times that I was around Allene were few, I always remember her positive impression of life. She visited my store in Clear Lake a few times with her lady friends, and made me feel like a star. She had an appreciation for creativity and enjoyed showing off her cousin. Jehovah God promises in his word at Psalms 37:11 that "the meek will possess the earth, and they will find exquisite delight in the abundance of peace." I cannot think of a better description of Allene's love of life and her love to enjoy the Earth. I hope to one day share that love with her and my mother when the Earth is rid of wickedness as verse 10 states, "wickedness will be no more". This will happen because Jesus gave his life so that mankind could have the opportunity to live in peace and happiness as originally purposed with Adam and Eve. That is why Jesus said at John 11:25, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who exercises faith in me, even though he dies, will come to life".

Ruth Ann Buttecali Burke

Ruth Burke - February 06, 2015 at 10:03 AM

SH

“ No one ever made me feel as special as Aunt Allene did. Love forever, Sherri

Sherri - February 06, 2015 at 08:12 AM

MR

“ Jehovah please comfort the Leonetti's family at this most difficult time. With Sympathy.

Ms Ruby - February 05, 2015 at 12:15 PM

TA

“ Dear Barbara, when Sharon called with the sad news of your Mom I got tears in my eyes. I am so happy to have met and known "Sharon's Aunt Allene" through her sister Rosalie Chumbly. Her vibrant personality would touch anyone's heart, she will be missed so much.

I remember the garage sale at Rosalie's house, when she saw the rocking chair I brought, it was hers, she had a keen eye for what she wanted.

Everyone related to her, or knew her can count themselves very fortunate.

*Love,
Terri Applegate*

Terri Applegate - February 05, 2015 at 12:15 PM



“ Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Allene Leonetti.



February 04, 2015 at 06:45 PM

MM

“ 1 file added to the album *New Album Name*



Mark Mason - February 04, 2015 at 01:25 PM

MM

“ Well, there are too many memories to share here. Mamaw (that's what Stephen and I called her) lived a huge life. Such a rich life can't be easily contained in such a small little white space. She was much bigger than that. So important to so many people.

So many memories.

The thing that stands out for me when it comes to Mamaw is the big impact she had on others. Mostly, she showered people with food, love and more food. She cared for people. After that came more food. I think the first words out of her mouth every time I walked through the door were always "Are you hungry, sweetheart." Often I wasn't but I ate anyway.

92 years of love and food.

As a child. I would beg mom to let me sleep over at Mamaw's house. I used to throw the most awful temper tantrums when I couldn't (for whatever reason) spend the night. Poor mom. I don't know how she survived it.

My two favorite memories (by far) are the amazing Christmas Eves that we would spend together and the camping trips. And of course, my memories of those events are full of food. She would always prepare these egg sandwiches on toast wrapped in foil for our camping trips, and we'd eat them in the car during our drive to the Texas Hill Country. Sometimes the sandwiches were a bit soggy, but I didn't care.

I still think about those trips every time I eat an egg sandwich.

Then there was a time when I was in college and needed a dorm fridge, but couldn't afford one (and wouldn't ask Mom and Dad for the money). Somehow, she found out about that, and the small refrigerator appeared.

And there was her harmonica.....

And the time I got 5 wasp stings in her back yard all at the same time...

And the cream puffs...

And the apple pies...

And the pasta with peas...(I can still see her making the bread crumbs)

I guess that I will miss Mamaw every day for the remainder of my life (I hope I get the same 92 years that she got).

What a great life for an amazing grandma.

*All my love forever,
Mark*

Mark Mason - February 04, 2015 at 07:21 AM

GM

Mr. Mason,

I do not know you, or your family but my condolences for your loss. I believe I may have found some baby photos of Ms. Allene Thompson from Navasota Texas. I would very much like to get them to someone in the family as they were obviously very loved by someone. If you are able, please send me an email to georgiameyer@gmail.com

I hate to contact you this way, but couldn't think of any other way to find your family.

Georgia Meyer - May 15, 2016 at 02:54 PM