



Sarah McClay

March 3, 1930 - December 8, 2020

On December 8, 2020 Sarah McClay passed away in Jacksonville, Florida at the age of 90.

She was born on March 3, 1930. She was married to James McClay on August 26, 1966. They raised a daughter Jacqueline and a son Eric. She enjoyed cooking, teaching children, and traveling to new places.

She is preceded in death by her husband James, parents Edward and Rosa Arias, brothers Fatino, Casamero, Gallo, Aurelio, Thomas, and Angel. Sisters Helen, Amparo, Louise, Gloria, and Eva.

She is survived by Eric McClay and Jacqueline McClay, cousins, and numerous nieces and nephews.

A Chapel Service will be held Saturday, December 19, 2020 at 11:00 AM, Fremont Chapel of the Roses, 1940 Peralta Blvd., Fremont. Burial to follow at 12:30 PM at Lone Tree Cemetery, Hayward, 24591 Fairview Ave, Hayward.

EULOGY:

Sarah McClay was born to Edwardo Arias and Rosa Rivera Arias in Niles, California 3 March 1930. She was the last of the 14 children. Two of the children passed early on in birth or shortly thereafter. They moved to Northern California to the town of Niles. They moved to Niles California, after coming

from Mexico in a covered wagon in 1910, they came on covered wagon from LA. to Niles. They made sure to tell us, that they were one of the first Mexican families in Niles.

Out of the twelve children: 6 boys and 6 girls they lived a humble life in Niles, California. There was a little house on Sycamore Street that their parents rented and later purchased. All twelve of them squeezed into it and it was not far from Alameda Creek (right across the street).

In her early years, Sarah made many memories with her brothers and sisters, going to Alameda creek and using it as their playground. They loved to catch pollywogs, fish, frogs, and one time even made little boats to sail around the creek area. They made many lifelong friends in Niles, some who are here today.

The adventures and the good times they had in Niles California, if you write their story, it reads better than a novel and plays in your head as the best movie you would ever see.

As the children grew older, they took on chores around the house, their father and mother tasked them with work around the farm. Sarah had six brothers: Arielio, Thomas, Fatimo, Casamero, Gallo, and Angel. Sarah's sisters: Gloria, Louise, Amparo, Helen, Eva would talk endlessly about their mother and her many talents in the kitchen and preparations she would make for her family. These recipes and stories in turn were passed down to Sarah and her sisters. All the stories that they heard from Grandma Rosa about her time growing up in Mexico, and not to mention all the famous saying and infamous stories of mischief they never acknowledged.

She was always interested in what her sisters and brothers were doing in their lives and activities. She always encouraged Eric (through his many careers) and Jackie to do their best and learn as much as possible about everything. She emphasized along with their father you can never be over prepared

enough, or never be too early, to be on time for an appointment.

Sarah met James Ellsworth McClay while at work. He was from Klamath Falls Oregon, and attended college in the San Francisco Bay Area and served in the Navy Reserves. They were married in the state of Nevada, Clark County on August 26, 1966. Their adventure began at this point as the two of them embarked on a life time of travel and moving from place to place to discover the many wonders in this great world that God had made. Their early travels took them throughout Europe: England, France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, and Germany. James had received a special student discount from the college he attended and they made the most of it!

Jacqueline (Jackie) her daughter was born in Palo Alto California and shortly thereafter her son Eric came along. Jackie and Eric would hear endless stories of how things were done in Europe as they were growing up, Sarah loved cooking, she would like nothing better than discovering a new recipe or gaining the secret ingredients in a favorite like spaghetti sauce. She acknowledged she obtained her famous spaghetti sauce recipe from a little old Italian lady that lived one floor down in the apartment complex in Palo Alto California. It was extremely delicious, as were all her dishes she prepared with love and kindness: at home, for her family and friends, for church potlucks, work potlucks, or family get together.

Sarah sought to improve herself and learn new and interesting things. She had many careers: beautician, electronic technician, restaurateur, and teacher.

The family moved to Grants Pass Oregon in 1981, where they tried their hand at a Mexican Restaurant. Called Sarita's Mexican Food. This lasted a couple of years, and then it was onto a new career. Sarah went back to school to obtain a certificate to be a preschool teacher in the state of Oregon in 1984.

This was her last profession and one of the most rewarding. Sarah put her son and daughter through Christian school with the discount she received for being a teacher at Christian Life School in Rouge River Oregon.

The family moved back to Fremont California in 1989 and Sarah continued in this career teaching children and sharing with parents the many stories and insights that she gained over her life time of travel and learning. Sarah worked for Fremont Christian School, Tot's landing, she learned and taught the Montessori curriculum, and finished her Career at Grace Christian Academy in Yuba City California.

The parents of the children Sarah taught were very grateful for her big heart, and in taking the time to help even the most suborned child as Eric McClay was about as stubborn as they get, and she managed to teach him a thing or two.

Sarah always encouraged her children to pursue their dreams and their interest, and even though they did not have much, she taught them the value of hard work. That by working hard enough they could realize their dreams, along with a good education. They took many trips in the family car to see exhibits, museums, outdoor events, car shows and anything that was open to the public or available for public viewing.

When Eric was little about 5 or 6 years old Sarah walked Eric and Jackie into the Allegro music store and announced to the proprietor that they were in need of an instrument. This was news to Eric as he thought they were just there to look around.

The man in the shop asked Eric what instrument he would like to play? He immediately said the drums, as there was a teenager in the cul-de-sac of the Mobil home park that we lived in, who had a garage band and it could be heard from blocks away! Sarah of course said "no". Eric then counter offered with the trumpet, as he thought this would be a good compromise. Sarah said "no". She then told the man that Eric was going to play the violin! Eric was at

his Wits end as to how he was finagled into this situation. Jackie strangely enough got to pick out the clarinet, Eric felt for the rest of his life that he was cheated on that deal.

Sarah stuck it to Eric, and said “you are going to learn something new”, and she took Eric to the local convent of the nuns, behind Ohlone College where he was introduced to sister Birtha. Needless to say Eric gave sister Birtha a run for her money, as more than one time he received laser piercing glares, and strong rebukes to bad notes and not becoming behavior. Sarah was determined to teach Eric something that was not one of his normal pursuits.

This again taught Eric the value of hard work, much practice, and persistence will get you many places in life. Eric became the second best fiddle player at that joint, learned the Suzuki method of playing and attended many concerts saw much of how the stage set ups worked and even played in the school production of "down by the river side" to a full house in the local church. That just goes to show how much Sarah wanted her children to pursue learning, no matter what the subject may have been. It also gave much pride to her, to know they could play songs in front of family and friends.

Sarah was always quick to make a friend, or ask about information on the local church that we could attend in every new place we lived or visited. She was close to her friends in California and Oregon. The church family from Rogue River, Oregon was like a home away from home to us. She made sure that Jackie and Eric attended all the service's including Sunday school and the youth group. Somehow they found a way to go to all the youth group events, many trips, to concerts, and other church's and youth get together across the state of Oregon.

Sarah had a love of watching animals on television and in real life. In her years as a pre-school teacher in Oregon for Christian Life School; she took a

couple of trips with the children in her class to the wild animal park. Taking her class and telling them about all the different animals was of particular enjoyment. She had countless stories of all the different reactions that some of the children would have, seeing the different animals, in real life, for the first time in their lives. After watching all the PBS specials and watching the nightly news and wild kingdom, every night as we ate dinner, she one time asked Jackie and Eric, "Why do you children like to travel so much?" They promptly replied "we get it from you".

Now Kay's children were especially close to her heart, as she took some time to care for them, she would always tell me the story of how she taught Solace her numbers and ABC's on the way home from school in the car. There never was a moment to waste for Sarah when it came to learning. She had a knack of teaching others and children things, that when others would have given up, she found a way, through one of her stories or analogies to make you understand the subject at hand. Sarah had a great time when she would return home every night later in life, as she would recount her stories of the kids she taught and her life and her exciting day.

Sarah would often say we are fighting a spiritual battle and we need to be strong in our faith and in God. Sarah said prayers every night for her relatives. Sarah never complained about things and just acknowledged that everything in her life was in God's hands. As long as all her basic needs were met, she did not need luxuries, and had wonderful extended family that she cherished and stayed in touch with, at all times. Sarah just took life and all its twist and turns in stride as she loved to teach, she had a good sense of humor and sometimes you could catch her saying about her life. "Not bad for a little old Mexican Lady".

Sarah will be missed by her family and friends, her humor, her sense of adventure and living her life and sharing the Lord to her fullest extent.

Sarah enjoyed traveling so much she came to join us here today, one last flight she managed to squeeze in flying from Florida to California... Ha...ha... ha...

But she has already left us and flown to glory to be in heaven with her brothers, sisters, her parents, and her husband James McClay. James once gave a Christmas card to Sarah that said "Your love makes even ordinary days happy, it makes our home my favorite place to be... And home and love never mean more than at Christmas." So, this Christmas they are going to share the holidays for now and to eternity.

Previous Events

Chapel Service

DEC 19. 11:00 AM (PT)

Fremont Chapel of the Roses
1940 Peralta Boulevard
Fremont, CA 94536
(510) 797-1900
fremontchapeloftheroses@yahoo.com
<https://www.fremontchapeloftheroses.com>

Burial

DEC 19. 12:30 PM (PT)

Lone Tree Cemetery
24591 Fairview Avenue
Hayward, CA 94542

Tribute Wall

JK

“ Sending up prayers for the whole extended family, especially for her children. Love you guys.

Jennifer (Forbes) Kreitman - January 02, 2021 at 09:02 PM

LO

“ My deepest condolences and prayers to the McClay family. Sarah was a beautiful soul that will be dearly missed by her family and friends.



Lanetta Odum - December 17, 2020 at 08:31 PM

EJ

“ My condolences to the family! I worked with Sarah years ago in a pre school setting. Electa Johnson

Electa Johnson - December 16, 2020 at 04:23 PM

CR

“ My condolences, she was inspiring! I taught with her at HappyBear. I enjoyed reading about her life. What an amazing woman

colleen ruel - December 16, 2020 at 11:35 AM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Sarah McClay.



December 15, 2020 at 11:54 AM



“ 1 file added to the album *Memories Album*



Fremont Chapel of the Roses - December 14, 2020 at 07:19 PM



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Fremont Chapel of the Roses - December 14, 2020 at 02:56 PM



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Fremont Chapel of the Roses - December 14, 2020 at 02:56 PM



“ 1 file added to the album Pamphlet for Service



Fremont Chapel of the Roses - December 14, 2020 at 02:55 PM



“ 0 file added to the tribute wall

Fremont Chapel of the Roses - December 14, 2020 at 02:50 PM