



Linda May Hickman

August 23, 1941 - May 4, 2024

Linda May (Porfily) Hickman passed away on Saturday, May 4, 2024 at her home. She was 82 years old. While the timing was unexpected, Linda had suffered with chronic health issues for several decades. Linda had a deep faith in God that had sustained her through brain surgeries over the past 20 years, radiation treatments, a variety of procedures and declining physical health. It was a blessing to both Linda and her family that she was called to heaven without suffering or lingering, after having a full week of activities, including visiting her daughter Laura in Milwaukie, calls and messages with family and friends, and running an errand the day before to pick up a new chicken for her daughter, DeAnna.

Linda was born August 23, 1941 in Prineville, Oregon, part of a third generation of Central Oregon pioneer ranchers. She grew up about 20 miles southeast of town on the Raised L Ranch along the Crooked River. Her first home had no indoor plumbing. Linda told funny stories about the pranks her Dad would pull on people using the outhouse. She attended the one-room rural Bailey schoolhouse until 8th grade, followed by Crook County High School. She graduated in 1959. Later that same year, the Porfily family was forced to move just upriver after the home base portion of their land was taken by eminent domain to construct the Prineville Reservoir.

Linda attended Oregon State University from 1959 to 1965, at a time when

passing a swimming test was required to graduate and a female student caught wearing pants would be called in by the Dean of Students. While there, she met fellow student Eugene (Gene) Hickman and they tied the knot in 1962. She graduated with her Masters degree in Education and started teaching near Corvallis at “the farm home school,” a residential facility for students with disciplinary issues. After Gene graduated, he took a job in Medford with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and they moved to Southern Oregon.

In Ashland, Linda and Gene’s three daughters were born - DeAnna (1969), Laura (1971) and Marla (1973). Marla was very sick as a baby and was diagnosed with a rare genetic condition called fanconi cystinosis. In 1976, Gene’s job as Rangeland Specialist transferred to Bend and the family moved to their home of 48 years in Dobbin Acres.

Marla’s medical needs were substantial and Linda devoted lots of time and attention to caring for her. Around the time of Marla’s kidney transplant (donated by Gene) in 1980, Linda drove Marla back and forth many times from Bend to OHSU in Portland for medical appointments. One year before Marla passed away in 1991, the Make a Wish Foundation granted the family a trip to the Holy Land which was a highlight in Linda’s life. Meanwhile, Linda still had a heart for teaching. From 1984 to 1996, she was an in-home tutor for the Bend-La Pine school district, working with kids who were not able to attend school in person.

Linda made her first cake for her Mom and started making cakes for others at church in 1966. She had a knack for baking, for decorating and for making people happy. She got her start as a simple word of mouth business. Linda used to meet with couples in the enclosed front porch of her home and baked and decorated wedding cakes in her home kitchen. Her daughter DeAnna joined in and grew into an amazing cake artist herself. Demand for The Cake

Lady grew so much that Linda and DeAnna needed to relocate to town, first in a rented bakery and then in 2008 to their own custom-built bakery on DeKalb Avenue.

It is no exaggeration to say that the Cake Lady became a local celebrity. It is not hard to find Central Oregon families for whom every major milestone (weddings, baby showers, birthdays, anniversaries, retirement parties), across multiple generations, was marked with a Cake Lady cake. Linda and DeAnna made quite literally thousands of cakes. As hundreds of couples know, every Cake Lady wedding cake came with an offer of a free pre-marriage counseling session. She would go over cake flavors, design options, and give advice on what it takes to make a long and successful marriage. This gift of wisdom from Linda has been treasured by countless couples and is an enduring testament to her impact on so many lives.

As her health declined in the later years, DeAnna took over doing most of the decorating and Linda continued the part of the business that she loved most - spending time talking with people about cakes, marriage, kids, church, cows, travel, cooking, and everything in between. She retired and closed the business in 2019 but disposing of decades worth of cake supplies and inventory kept her busy for the next several years. She also enjoyed spending more time with family, friends, traveling and finally having weekends off.

Linda was preceded in death by her parents Robert Porfily and Hazel (Way) Porfily and her daughter, Marla Hickman. She is survived by her husband of 62 years, Gene Hickman, daughters DeAnna Kinsey and Laura Hickman (husband Raymond Olma), brothers Donald and Frank Porfily, Grandchildren Jaydra Kinsey, Madelyn Olma, Lydia Olma and Hudson Olma as well as many extended family members.

There will be a viewing held Thursday, May 16, from 2 - 6pm at Niswonger-Reynolds, 105 NW Irving Ave, Bend. Memorial service will be held at 12:30 on May 17, 2024, at Church of the Cascades (Christian Life Center), 21720 US Hwy 20, Bend, OR 97701. A graveside service will follow.

In lieu of flowers, please consider donating to the Salvation Army or [InspirationalGiving.org](https://www.InspirationalGiving.org). Inspirational Giving is a local organization run by dear friends, the Higgins family. They raise and donate beef to local food pantries. Donations here would do a lot of good in her name so, as Linda would say, "let's bless their socks off."

Previous Events

Visitation

MAY 16. 2:00 PM - 6:00 PM (PT)

Niswonger-Reynolds Funeral Home
105 NW Irving Ave.
Bend, OR 97703
(541) 382-2471
<http://www.Niswonger-Reynolds.com>

Memorial Service

MAY 17. 12:30 PM (PT)

Church Of The Cascades
21720 US Hwy 20
Bend, OR 97701

Tribute Wall

CS

“ Linda was an incredible person and a gift to all that were blessed to meet her. Linda made our wedding cake in 1991 knowing we were two broke kids she made our cake absolutely stunning and more than we could have ever afforded. She was a bright light that God used to shine and bring happiness to those around her. We are praying overwhelming peace and comfort over your family during this difficult time. All our love, Corey & Marianne Salt

Corey and Marianne Salt - May 24, 2024 at 12:56 AM

HL

“ Linda is a cousin and my first introduction to her was when I was about 8 years old. I fell in love with porcelain dolls, cake decorating, and flower arranging because of Linda. I was the youngest person to sign up for a cake decorating class at the age of 12 and could not wait to tell Linda. I was blessed to get to spend time with Linda on several occasions when she and Gene visited family here in Northern Ca. She even made the cake for my sisters wedding, and my Grandparent's 50, 65 and 70 wedding anniversary cakes. Gene was a hero to deliver each and every one making a 6 hour trek. Linda was loved by everyone in our family and will be missed. I know she is experiencing the wonder and excitement of exploring all heaven has to offer with her loving Savior, her daughter and countless other family members. Love and wonderful memories until we meet again, Heather (Forsman) Long.

Heather Long - May 14, 2024 at 04:33 PM

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“ I'm so sorry to hear the passing of Linda! She made are cake for are wedding in 2000. And I was friends with her daughter Marla!!

katie Leamy (Ipock) - May 09, 2024 at 09:54 PM



“ 15 files added to the album *Memories Album*



Niswonger Reynolds Funeral Home & Greenwood Cemetery - May 09, 2024 at 01:42 PM