



Launa Weeks

May 23, 1921 - September 9, 2019

Launa May Whipple Weeks, 98, of Poway, CA and formerly a long-time resident of Kankakee, Illinois died September 9, 2019 at Palomar Pomerado Hospital in Poway, CA. Launa had moved to Poway (San Diego area) in June, 2015 to live close to her daughter, Susan.

Launa (and her twin brother, Lyle) were born May 23, 1921 in Kansas City, MO to Clyde W. and Myrtle Launa (Smith) Whipple. Launa was the last of Clyde and Myrtle's six children to die; she was preceded in death by one sister (Claribel Carpenter) and four brothers (Ward, Grant, Lyle, and C. David Whipple).

Launa married life-long Kankakee resident Lawrence D. Weeks December 28, 1948 in Parkville, MO. Lawrence ("Larry") served as a First Lieutenant in the 8th Air Force during WW II, completing 33 heavy bombardment missions over France and Germany - and having been decorated with multiple medals, including the Distinguished Flying Cross. Lawrence worked for the JC Penney Co. for 34 years. He died April 13, 2002. Launa and Larry were married for 54 years.

Launa was also preceded in death by her daughter, Jane Lucy Weeks of Avon, CT who died Nov., 17, 2003. Launa is survived by Jane's four children: Kelly Wilsey of York, ME (great-grandson, Benjamin), Alexis Sheldon and husband, Nolan of Bethesda, MD (great-granddaughter, Emeline; great-grandsons, Peter and Timothy Lawrence), Ted Lawrence Randazzo of New Jersey, and Jack Randazzo of CA.

Launa is survived by her daughter, Susan Launa Weeks of Poway, CA. She is also survived by Susan's husband, John Mullen (Poway) and Susan's son, Ryan Roleson of Bakersfield, CA. Additionally, she is survived by three sisters-in-law, cousins, and many nieces and nephews.

Launa graduated from Parkville, MO High School in 1939. She received her BA degree from Baker University (Baldwin, KS) in 1943 with a major in sociology and as a member of the Alpha Chi Omega Sorority. In 1946 Launa received a Master's Degree from the University of Chicago where she studied both religious education and early childhood education.

Launa moved to Kankakee in October, 1946 to organize, direct, and become the teacher of the Family Nursery School, sponsored by the Kankakee Community Chest. The Family Nursery School, which opened in January, 1947 was a parent-participation pre-school for three, four, and five year old children.

In September, 1950 after the Family Nursery School was discontinued, Launa entered Kankakee School District 111, initially teaching at Lafayette School for 2 ½ years. Subsequently, from September, 1955 until May, 1959 Launa operated a private nursery school in her home, students of which included her two young daughters, Susan and Jane. In Sept., 1959 – once, Susan and Jane had entered public school – Launa returned to Kankakee District 111 where she primarily taught kindergarten at Steuben School (also Edison School), until retiring in June, 1981. Launa's career in childhood education spanned 35 years.

Launa was a member of St. Paul's Episcopal Church for more than fifty years, during which time she taught Sunday School as well as Vacation Bible School.

Launa was an active member of the Kankakee Federation of Teachers.

Launa was a past president and held other offices in P.E.O., Chapter JR in Kankakee. She also belonged to P.E.O. Chapter D in Avon, CT during the three years she lived with Jane's family (2000 - 2003).

Launa was a member of the Kankakee County Historical Society. She was a member of the Kankakee Women's Club, as well as the Minerva Book Review

Club. She was a 4H leader. Launa and Larry were members of the Quadrille Dance Club; both Launa and Larry loved to dance. Prior to Quadrille, on Friday nights they danced at the American Legion. Additionally they danced with Larry's JC Penney work associates at the Kankakee Hotel Gold Room. Launa's hobby was photography/filming. Starting in 1956 when Susan and Jane were ages 3 and 2 years old (respectively), Launa started taking reel-to-reel film "movies". Subsequently, every birthday, holiday, vacation, significant family event for decades was captured in film. When audio movie cameras became available, Launa began capturing voice, as well as the event visually. It was as though she loved her life and the people in her life so much she wanted to retain it all! When she moved to CA (2015), Susan converted many of the reels of film to DVD for Launa to watch on a portable DVD player. These DVDs reignited Launa's memories of loved ones and special occasions.

Launa and Larry loved to travel. With their two daughters they traveled extensively in the 49 continental US states, including driving to Alaska in the summer of 1970. Additionally, the Weeks' family's summer vacations always included travel to Launa and Larry's siblings spread across the United States from Maine to Georgia to Oregon to California/Arizona. Once Susan and Jane had their own families, Launa and Larry made extraordinary efforts to drive both to the east coast (CT) and the west coast (CA) for the births and birthdays of their five grandchildren. Additionally, Launa's Whipple siblings had annual family reunions throughout the country which Launa and Larry attended. Family was treasured!

Additional valued travel for Launa and Larry included attendance at Larry's 8th Airforce reunions, perhaps the most notable of which was held in Lavenham, England, the group's "base" from which the crew originated bombardment missions over France and Germany. Both Launa and Lawrence were deeply moved to see the farm field runway from which Lawrence's crew departed in their B-24 bomber.

Memorial Service:

Launa's Memorial Service: All are welcome! Visitation will be held Saturday, October 19 at St. Paul's Episcopal Church (298 S. Harrison Ave. Kankakee, IL 60901).

Visitation from 10A - 11A Canon Parker Room of the church.

Memorial Service: start 11A followed by inurnment in the church yard columbarium. Rev. Israel Anchan of St. Paul's will officiate.

12 noon: Family and friends gathering in the church Fellowship Hall with light lunch and slide show of Launa's life.

In lieu of flowers or gifts, Launa's family requests memorials be made to St. Paul's Episcopal Church (298 S. Harrison Ave. Kankakee, IL). Memorial envelopes will be available at the church the day of the memorial service. Please sign her online guestbook at www.schrefflerfuneralhomes.com.

Previous Events

Visitation

OCT 19. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

St. Paul's Episcopal Church
298 S. Harrison Ave
Kankakee, IL 60901
(815) 932-6611

Funeral Service

OCT 19. 11:00 AM (CT)

St. Paul's Episcopal Church
298 S. Harrison Ave
Kankakee, IL 60901
(815) 932-6611

Tribute Wall

NR

“ *Mrs. Weeks was my kindergarten teacher at Steuben school in Kankakee, Illinois in 1962. She was kind. I remember one day she helped me open my milk carton at snack time. I had a really good time in her class. It was a good start to school.*

Nancy Reynolds - July 31, 2025 at 08:57 AM



“ *Launa Weeks*

February 03, 2023 at 04:30 AM

ND

“ *Dear Susan,*

I am a returned university professor, 72, now living in Cuba, New York. My brother, retired Judge J. Gregory Householter, living in Kankakee, sent me the news clipping of your mother's obituary and also Dennis Marek's lovely remembrance from the Kankakee Journal. My mother, Mary Householter, was also a 50 year member of St. Paul's. So I saw her at church as well. Greg and I both were introduced to how many years of education, through your dear mother in kindergarten at Steuben School back in 1949 and 1950. Little did I know how highly educated your mother was; I only know how much I loved going and how affectionate she was and how much fun learning could be. She lived a full and rewarding life. And now the reward.

Dr. Nora Dooley

Nora Dooley - October 17, 2019 at 12:03 PM

AL

“ Mrs. Weeks was my kindergarten teacher in 1973-1974 at Steuben Elementary school. She made a huge impression on me. I always remembered her fondly. I invited her to my wedding and she came! Of course, the wedding was at St. Paul's. She was tickled that I remembered her, but, how can you forget your very first teacher. She was a great lady and a wonderful educator.

Amy LaCost - October 13, 2019 at 12:48 AM

DA

“ Had this wonderful woman as my kindergarten teacher back in 1977, as my sister had a few years prior... nothing but good memories for both of us. May God rest Launa Weeks in peace.

~Dakar

Dakar - October 10, 2019 at 01:59 AM

PB

“ To the Weeks Family,

My condolences on your Mothers passing. She also was my Kindergarten. I always enjoyed going to school and having her as my teacher. She always made you feel special.

Pam (Mellinger) Bloomquist

Pam Bloomquist - October 08, 2019 at 12:04 PM



“ *I had the pleasure of meeting Launa while working at Butterfield Assisted Living. I loved hearing about her life stories, she was such a nice lady. RIP Launa*

*Vicki Tousignant
Riverside Senior Living*

Vicki Sanford-Tousignant - September 19, 2019 at 08:50 PM



“ *Your wonderful mother was my kindergarten teacher. What an absolutely wonderful woman she was. I was briefly hospitalized while in her class, and she came to visit me in the hospital. I am sure that she has touched countless lives. I know that she made a big difference in mine.*

Chris Fisherkeller

Chris Fisherkeller - September 18, 2019 at 08:26 PM

LN

Launa Weeks was my (and my brother, Darin's) kindergarten teacher at Steuben School in 1965. She was a kind woman who understood the needs & wants of children in the throes of their first educational experience. To this day, I have memories of her, my classmates, and our classroom. She gave my brother & I a firm foundation as we continued our schooling at St. Patrick's Elementary. Please know that your mother did a world of good for so many of us, and we will not forget her. May you have comfort & peace in the days to come.

*Lan Nichols
Wilmington NC*

Lan Nichols - September 19, 2019 at 09:25 AM

KA

I will always remember Mrs. Weeks, my third grade teacher at Steuben School, with great fondness and a smile. She was so kind and understanding and welcomed my visits to her home in Riverview where we both lived. What a wonderful person who impacted so many!

Kelly (Saathoff) Andrews

Kelly Andrews - October 06, 2019 at 08:21 PM

JS

Miss Launa was my preschool teacher for two years in the Family Nirsery School. 1948-1950. My parents elected for me to remain in the preschool for a second year rather than enroll in the new kindergarten class in the public school system. She remained a longtime friend with my mother, Eula Strasma. Miss Launa took each child individually on a personal field trip - I remember walking along the bank of the Kankakee River with her to see what treasures we might find. I brought home the skeleton of a tiny creature that we found along the bank.

*Jan Strasma
Maple Park IL*

Jan Strasma - October 14, 2019 at 08:17 PM