

# Obituary of Charlene Marie Bray

When the local craft market closed this year due to the pandemic, Charlene Marie Bray stopped sewing jeans aprons and started sewing cloth masks. She made hundreds, for friends, family and nurses in the community, all beautifully stitched in bright cotton prints.

It was her resourcefulness and kindness that saw Charlene through what she considered her life's greatest accomplishment: raising three children as a single mother. "The sacrifice she made for us kids," her son recalls, "She was working full time and going to school to make a better life for us. And she just repurposed everything we had."

Charlene could sew anything, and would proudly say as much. She made her children everything from coats and bell bottoms, to matching top and pant sets, and even costumes for parties. She also fixed their bikes by hand, taught them how to garden and helped her two eldest get their first jobs, picking strawberries and beans in Oregon's fields. And she loved teaching people to sew. Her eldest daughter later won a Bernina, the workhorse of sewing machines, in a sewing competition using the skills her mother taught her.



She had an equally resourceful career as a curtain seamstress, Process Manager at Tektronix, Assembly Supervisor at Goodwill Industries and Production Operations Analyst at Lockheed Martin. Charlene later put her artistic talent to work when she returned to school for graphic design. She also was active in Beaverton Toastmasters, was a volunteer Junior Achievement Advisor and loved ballroom dancing, the beach, and meeting friends for coffee.

Charlene was born in Tacoma, Washington on Feb. 19, 1940, the eldest child of the late Elizabeth Ray Bishop, a payroll clerk, and Boyd Otis Kreider, a shipyard pipe fitter and seasonal Alaskan commercial salmon fisherman.

She grew up in Tacoma, Washington, and moved to Hillsboro, Oregon in 1969, where she lived until moving to California with her youngest daughter in 1981. She moved back to Portland, Oregon in 1994 and lived close to family.

During her time in California, Charlene loved to visit epic flea markets held in a drive-in movie theater parking lot and rescue produce that had fallen off farm trucks barreling down the highway. Once, her youngest daughter's car stalled in front of her while entering the busy Santa Cruz Hwy 17 and Charlene rammed into it from behind, saving her life from two oncoming semi trucks.

Charlene is survived and will be dearly missed by her sisters Carmen Taylor and Jenine Miller (Jim), brother Gary Kreider (Ellen), three children: Mark Bray, Kerry

Cadambi, and Kristina Menezes, and five grandchildren: Anjali, Kiran (Fernanda), Jesse, Sergio, and Ethan. She was preceded in death by her beloved cat Kiki.

She died peacefully with her two daughters and sister beside her at the hospital on Aug. 22, 2020. Her family extends the deepest gratitude to the nurses and doctors at Kaiser Permanente Medical Center who cared for her with great kindness and love.

A virtual 'Celebration of Life' will be held at a later date, and anyone who knew and loved Char is welcome to attend (contact her daughter Kerry at [pinnaclewear@gmail.com](mailto:pinnaclewear@gmail.com) for details).