



## Valerie Cagey

April 8, 1961 - December 13, 2023

In loving memory of Valerie Cagey

Sunrise: April 8, 1961

Sunset: December 13, 2023

Valerie was born to Clarence “Jack” Cagey, and Beverly (Solomon) Cagey in Sacramento, California. She started out in life as a teeny-tiny little girl, barely tipping the scale at five lbs., but she grew up strong. And with three brothers, she learned to be tough while still being very much a girly girl. Her mom remembers trying to teach her how to fish on the river at the age of nine. Valerie went along with it but preferred to be in the company of her cousins, Anna and Charlene. “Those three girls are running around together now up in heaven.” Says Beverly. “I can see it.”

When they were children, Valerie loved to go to the movies at the Mount Baker Theater, where you could trade a Dairy gold milk jug logo for a ticket to the Saturday cartoons. During the weekdays, she kept busy maintaining good grades and participating in many extracurricular activities. She took swimming lessons and piano lessons and enjoyed baton twirling, drill team,

cheerleading, baseball, and basketball, even occasionally earning recognition as the highest scorer in her basketball games.

She ran for Miss Indian America in Portland, Oregon and she even participated in hula dancing with a Hawaiian teacher. She made her own hula dress, and when she danced, her mother remembers, “she looked like a little butterfly.” But above all the activities she participated in, Valerie especially loved our own cultural songs and dances.

Her cousin Casimir recalls one time while singing the family songs, her dad Jack couldn't remember the flow to one part of a song and, even at the age of six or seven, Valerie knew. She went and whispered the song in her dad's ear, and he smiled and shook his head and started singing again right where the song left off. Her little brother Raymond, Sha-min-ton, Swa-Las (I) remembers, “We were always happy with spirits lifted to whatever came our way. She loved for me to sing. She would say, loud and cheerful, Sing Brother, Sing! We did a lot together. We laughed so much our stomachs hurt.”

As an adult, she was brought into her seyown life at the old smokehouse. And after graduating from Bellingham High School, she attended school in Vancouver, Washington, to learn to be a flight attendant. It was her dream to travel the world. She also attended Bellingham Technical College and earned her degree in cashiering and bookkeeping. And though she didn't take to fishing for herself, she would sometimes go visit the fishermen on the river.

One time her cousin and her brother were out on the water all day without any luck. Valerie showed up and started throwing rocks in the water, and then suddenly, the fish showed up. You better stick around they told her. Despite being a good luck charm, she could only stand about twenty minutes in the casino. She didn't care much for big crowds, favoring quiet visits with family, and the company of her children, her grandbabies, and her cats.

“Her boys were her strength and love, and she loved her grandkid.” says her brother Raymond. Her niece Autumn adds, “Aunty loved her kitties. Every single one.” Valerie was the eldest niece to her uncle Victor and Aunty Maria. She is also survived by her mother Beverly Cagey, her brothers Clarence “Monty”, Raymond, and Henry (Yvonne) Cagey, sons Alec Cagey, Robert Bunton, Jr. and Jack Cagey-Bunton, her grandson Jack Jack Jack Cagey, and her partner of 15 years, Ernie Williams of Spokane. She will be missed, but she is at peace.

# Tribute Wall



“ *Rest in peace dear lady.* ”

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**Jay Samson** - December 22, 2023 at 12:00 AM