



## Leanna P Garrison

May 19, 1951 - February 28, 2021

On May 19, 1951, Leanna Patricia Garrison was born to Jack and Marybelle Garrison.

She started school at Delake Grade School, continued to Taft High School, graduating in 1969, and went to OCE, graduating in 1974 to start her teaching career. Her teaching career is best summarized by Diane Brodie.

"During my own career, I wore several hats that allowed me time in classrooms... I had the opportunity to observe many teachers and when I think of the cream of the crop, I think of Leanna Patricia Garrison as being at the top!

"Leanna's teaching career began at Taft Elementary School working with special needs students for Edith Bentley, who was on sabbatical. When Edith returned, Leanna moved to 2nd grade, the level she had trained for. Soon she decided she was doing a lot of wiping noses and buttoning coats, so she decided to try the 'big kids.' She found her niche with 6th graders.

"As I reflect on the 25 years I've watched... and even had the privilege of being part of... her create opportunities for kids, the amazing experiences she has given students seems unbelievable! One of her most famous is KIDS News... a TV program produced, directed and filmed by students, and shown

locally once every week.

"Having students compete in Olympic Games has been a culmination to a study of Ancient Greece. A huge festival, complete with a pig roasted in the ground, went with the study of Medieval Times. Leanna has always believed students learn best by seeing things first-hand, so when the King Tut exhibit was in Seattle, she bussed her students there to experience it. When the exhibit recently came to Los Angeles, she put her whole class on a plane and jetted them off to see it in LA! Students learned about Africa by researching, creating and illustrating a book, then sharing these with family at an evening program that included entertainment by professional African musicians. Students experienced Oregon with a 3-day trip to Bend, visiting Lava Lands, obsidian flows, and even an observatory where they could view planets in the clear night sky. Portland was the location for being part of the audience for AM Northwest, riding MAX, touring the Pittock Mansion and spending a night at OMSI. Also in Portland, students walked with and learned from a bridge historian as they looked at Portland's bridges up close.

"Because she believes part of learning is acquiring proper etiquette, and the way to learn is to do, Leanna's students put on teas for special friends and family, attended concerts and stage plays and even enjoyed a luncheon at a very fancy restaurant learning which fork to use and when!

"Of course, we all know we can't do these kinds of things with the money that has been allocated to us, so Leanna's creativity also went to fund raising. Probably the most famous was Valentine Cookies... one year, 2,500 cookies were baked, decorated and delivered complete with personal messages, some as far away as Dallas or even Medford!

"Because of her endless creativity, Leanna was an integral part of the team that put together Taft Middle School. A believer that the staff that plays

together works better together, Leanna turned her creativity to amazing annual staff events we lovingly called 'Our Excellent Adventures.'

"During her career, Leanna has helped train 11 administrators, countless secretaries and touched the lives of about 1,000 students! The lives of these students have been enriched far beyond the traditional. Testimony to their appreciation is the fact that many of her students now have children of their own and they request Leanna for their sons and daughters!

"The world of education is losing a jewel... Leanna is truly the best of the best!

"I'd like to leave you with a poem I think says all about Leanna...

No printed word, no spoken plea

Can teach young minds what they should be;

Not all the books on all the shelves...

But what the teacher is herself!

"Leanna, my hat's off to you!"

Leanna passed away February 28, 2021.

Leanna was preceded in death by her niece Kajsa Clay Garrison last May.

Leanna is survived by her parents, Jack and Marybelle, her 'Baby Brother' Larry and his wife Cindy, nephew Kenneth (KC), niece Kenda and her husband Aaron, nephew Kolby, niece Haylie and nephews Jaxon and Jayce,

along with friends and thousands of past students.