**EULOGY**

**FOR**

**PEGGY BRYAN BY BILL BRYAN**

**2/16 HS revs for BB**

Good morning everyone and thank you for being here to celebrate the life of a special woman that meant so much to each one of us. She was a friend to most... an inspiration to all who knew her. She cared and taught us with her kindness and strength, her talents and her experience about being flexible in life... her devotion to her family and her dedication to God... she endured unthinkable loss and incredible challenges, yet through it all, she maintained a spirit and tenacity that taught everyone in her life what it truly means to be an amazingly **fine** person. Throughout her incredible ninety seven years on this earth, she was a loving and caring daughter, sister, wife, aunt, grandmother, great-grandmother and great-great grandmother, and most of all, to me, she was all that and more... she was a thoughtful, compassionate, courageous example of goodness. Many of the people in her family can share personal experiences about spending meaningful time with her and learning lessons of life…… and every day I count my blessings that she was my mother.

We all know and share stories of how my mom, Peggy Bryan, lived her life and led by example. While superficially, some may have thought she lived a simple life, it was intricate and deep. At times my mother seemed to be an endless source of creativity and reinvention. She exemplified the adage, “That which doesn’t kill you makes you stronger.” Throughout the course of her long and productive life, my mother went back to school at age forty-six years, earned her degree, and became a registered nurse. Nursing was her career and it meant so much to her because she was giving back and helping people in need.

She expressed her artistic talents in her love of doll making, and in her mid to latter years in coloring very difficult beautiful pictures and caricatures, line dancing at the Rancho Cucamonga Sr. Center till she was 94 years old, and by enjoying visits to the beach, museums, art exhibits of all kinds, and seeing stage plays and shows. She honored her love of nature with her passion for gardening and her devotion to **ALL** creatures.... her dogs and cats, her turtles (**Humphrey and Pippin**), and **of course**, her **iguana Iggy**... (**And wait for the laugh**). She lived to learn and to explore. Whether she was at her homes in Los Angeles, Oceanside, Chino Hills, Rancho Cucamonga, or traveling to places like Tahiti, Europe, Africa and Hawaii, my mom devoted her life to learning, caring, and doing for others.... always guided by her faith.

As her son, I was blessed to have a mother that led such an exemplary life.... she truly raised the bar on what it means to be a good, sincere, resilient person. I don’t know if many of you have ever heard of the Yiddish word “haimish.” Technically, it means, “homey, cozy, unpretentious.” It also indicates a person of character... one who is there for others and lives his or her life devoted to pure **goodness**... I’m sure you can see where I’m going with this. My mother was the personification of that ideal. No matter the trials or challenges that stood in her way... and there were many... and they were daunting... Peggy Bryan rose to each one.... worked through her grief... anger... frustration... despair... and just grew with the Lord carrying her in his footsteps, she became stronger, and taught us all by example.

There was a period in our lives during which she and I were not as logistically close as in previous years or years to follow, but my mother, whether she realized it or not, was, is, and always will be, with me.... She shouldered so much throughout her life.... she was a rock... helpful, compassionate... and always there when someone in our family or her friends needed her.

And many did... she endured the unthinkable loss of two of her children... David, who died in a tragic accident at 20 and my sister Valarie who lost a battle with pancreatic cancer too early in her life... but Mom was there helping care for her and other family members... through her own insurmountable grief. Some may have observed that she had a hard life, but she was truly **engaged** in every aspect and lived it with grace... and humor. In her later years, as we got even closer and spent much cherished time in connection and conversation, I will never forget when.... in the middle of one of her reminiscences of all that she had been through.... and **survived**... said, “If I knew I was going to live this long, I would have been a smoker and drinker.” (**Wait for the laugh**).

It’s observations and maxims like that one.... seemingly simple yet eloquent, funny, and telling, that write the saga... and tell of “the legend of “Margaret (Peggy) Bryan.” She was also a good... (Maybe too good), disciplinarian... There are so many stories I could relate but... back when I was a kid in high school... we had moved from Victorville to Pomona... and there was this girl.... and I was smitten... I’d call her every night... until my mother put a lock on the phone... but teenage love knows no bounds... I broke the lock and called again... and sure enough, that lock was replaced with a firm warning... “Billy Boy please do not remove that lock again!!!!”.... Needless to say it stayed on... (**Wait for the laugh**) She was consistently devoted to a fault... placing others before self... **BOY** were we all blessed!! ... I want to believe that she recognized and had a real and vivid memory of all that she meant to each one of us. For her seventy- fifth birthday, my mother received so many incredible letters and notes acknowledging just what she meant to everyone. Each written communication provided a piece to complete the entire portrait that represents my mother’s impact on those who knew her.

Margaret Bryan lives on in all of us. Each time we reminisce... every thought we share... in every gesture of hers we find ourselves mimicking, she remains with us. Her faith provided a light for her in the darkest of times and memories of her will continue to provide light and guidance for us. The two of us, as I said, had many cherished moments and conversations in her later years, and for that I will always be grateful. At times, when things seemed to get to be too much, she would sit, frustrated, and wonder and say to me “ I must have done something wrong to make God mad because he just wont take me so I can be in heaven with my loved ones.... Why?” And I would look at her and say, “Because your time is not yet up. There is still much for you to do and you can see the blessings you bring to family, people at your church and at Inland Christian Home. There’s obvious joy you bring to us and to them and God knows we all needed your assurance and faith. You’re just not done yet....” and when the time did come... God made it very peaceful... and complete.

If there’s anything we all should learn from the passing of Margaret Bryan, it’s this... know that you’re stronger than your circumstances... cherish those around you.... count your blessings... and celebrate the unbreakable human connection... Thank you all!