



In Loving Memory

Paula Joanne Espinosa

June 30, 1940 - November 4, 2006

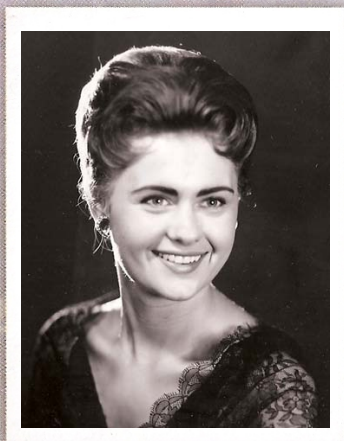
I do not bring beauty to people's lives;
I, perhaps, draw their attention to beauty which is already there.



Paula Joanne Espinosa, the only child of Fred and Ardath Espinosa, was born on June 30, 1940 in Denver, Colorado. As a youngster, Paula was sent to live with her grandparents in Seattle while her father fought in World War II and her mother worked in a factory to support the war effort. Shortly after her father returned from the war, the family moved to Montana, where Paula spent the majority of her childhood. The family moved back to Denver in the late 50's, and Paula graduated from West High School in 1958.

As a young woman Paula was a model and competed in beauty contests, coming in as a finalist in the 1958-59 Queen of Colorado (the local competition to determine Colorado's Miss Universe entrant) and winning Miss Broadmoor Hotel in the mid-60's.

In addition to her outward beauty Paula also was very smart, earning a scholarship to attend the University of Colorado at Boulder's Engineering School. She became one of the forerunners of women in the hard sciences; there was only one other woman admitted to the program that year.



Paula ended up leaving school to go live on the sandy shores of Hawaii just after it achieved statehood in 1959. Island living ended up being too confining to her spirit and so she moved to Southern California. She lived there for a couple of years, working at NASA just at the time John Kennedy announced his ambitious plan to land a man on the moon. She bore firsthand witness to NASA's first flight in an X-15 aircraft. About this same time, she had the unique opportunity to accompany Prince Sisouphannouvong of Laos for an evening out during his tour of the US. She thoroughly enjoyed it, noting he spoke mostly French and was a perfect gentleman.



In 1961 Paula moved back to Colorado. Almost immediately she found a job with IBM. Though she hated it at first, her father encouraged her to give it a couple of months.

Those couple of months ended up being 28 1/2 years. During her tenure at IBM, she worked in a range of positions, many of which drew upon her artistic proclivities. Her jobs included being a draftsman, photographer, and editor. Being an IBMer became as much a part of her identity as being a Coloradan -- most of the friends she made can be traced back to IBM. She and many of her colleagues "retired" in the late '80's and early '90's as IBM restructured. Though it nearly broke her heart when she retired, it did allow her to pursue her true calling, being an artist.

In 1975 Paula began a second full-time job: being a single parent. Although she had been told it was impossible for her to get pregnant, nonetheless she found herself picking out a bassinet and baby clothes. With the support of her own mother, Paula raised Tiffany to be strong, smart and bold. It took a lot of sacrifices, but Paula was able to balance work and home life with enviable grace. Paula and Tiffany's relationship only deepened as they each grew older, until as adults they found themselves to be as much friends as mother and daughter.

In her later years, retired and with Tiffany off on her own path, Paula was able to pursue more of her artistic passions. Her talents were broad and deep; she played the guitar and the banjo, sketched, painted, sculpted, did photography, needlepoint, papercrafting, and calligraphy. She collected books, with her art and cookbooks being amongst her most beloved possessions.

Paula, a warm and thoughtful friend, had relationships spanning decades with Janet Nicholson, Jeanette Emory, and Nita Peterson. She made new friends too with neighbors who looked out for her, like Bill and Jordan Giffen and Caroline Jensen. Paula (known as Joanne to family) stayed close to her many cousins throughout her life, enjoying special time near the end of her life with some of her most beloved cousins: Roberta McLean, Kathy and Danny Baca, and Delores Espinosa.

She will be missed; many loved her and were touched by her life.



Paula Joanne Espinosa

Born

June 30, 1940
Denver, Colorado

Passed Away

November 4, 2006
Lakewood, Colorado

Funeral Service

Wednesday, November 15, 2006, 10:30am
St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church
Denver, Colorado

Father Jerome Rohr, Officiating

God, You made me from before I was born.
You took me through my life. You supported me.
You were there with me
Even when I wasn't there with You.
There were times when I was sick and
You healed me.
There were times I was in despair and
You gave me hope.
It was a wonderful life. I loved and I was loved.
I sang, I heard music, I saw flowers,
I saw sunrises and sunsets.
Even in places when I was alone,
You, in my heart, helped me
turn loneliness into precious solitude.
And I look back over the panorama of my life,
What a wonderful privilege this was!
I trust that whatever in the web of life that
needed me to be there is now completed.
I thank You for taking the burden from me,
And I thank You for keeping me in the Light.