



## Carmen Garcia Caswell

February 5, 1948 - December 1, 2017

Carmen Garcia Caswell, born February 5th 1948, lover of nature, flaming hot Fritos corn chips, and intrepid explorer of exotic cultures and lands, died on Friday December 1st, 2017 at the age of 69.

Winston Churchill must have been writing about Carmen, not Russia, when he described it as, "a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma." She died a vegetarian, but could be found most mornings sitting at the counter of Chubby's on Mooney Blvd., shooting the breeze with servers and cooks, eating a bowl of oatmeal and a side of beans cooked in lard.

In the spring of 1973, she married Roger D. Caswell. They enjoyed a peaceful and unconventional, marriage till his passing in 1999. She was a globetrotter while he stayed closer to home preferring, what was then called, Visalia Lanes over the fast lane. She never tired of peppering her language with "Rogerisms" like, "how'd you like them apples?"

Her love of animals was legendary. She volunteered at the Fresno Wildlife Rescue for nearly 10 years, painstakingly rehabilitating owls and red tail hawks in order to return them to their natural habitat. It wasn't unusual to find frozen mice and turkey chicks in her freezer, dinner for her fine-feathered friends.

A true Renaissance woman, she was versed in String Theory as well as Downton Abbey. Always an adventurer, she traveled extensively in the US, but her journeys also took her to India, Hong Kong, Canada, Mexico, Europe, China, Peru, Tibet, and Nepal.

Carmen followed her heart to sacred and holy places throughout the world. She visited temples, ancient pyramids, hidden chambers, grand cathedrals, ashrams, mountain tops, forests and rivers, but she'd often say her favorite place was her backyard; listening to her chimes with her beloved dog, Khalil, by her side.

One of her favorite nieces wrote, "Carmen was doing energy work before energy work was even a thing." As a Reiki Master, she used this healing modality to subtly and profoundly spread light wherever she went.

Carmen believed that one of the greatest gifts you could give a child was a book. She worked at the Tulare County Office of Education (TCOE) for 30 years and in her quiet unassuming way provided educational materials and support to thousands and thousands of children throughout the Valley.

One of her last requests was actually caught on video. She said that when she died she wanted Janis Joplin's, "Ball and Chain" to be played. And it will. A ceremony will be held January 13th, 10AM at Three Rivers Cemetery, 41841 Sierra Dr., Three Rivers CA and will be followed at 2PM by dancing and revelry at Valley Oaks Golf Course, 1800 S. Plaza St., Visalia CA.

In lieu of flowers, a donation box will be placed at Valley Oaks for those wishing to contribute. Carmen is survived by her siblings: Jess Garcia, Rose Mary Van Groningen and Daniel Garcia. Her nieces, nephews, grand nieces and grand nephews are too numerous to mention, but they all loved her well and despite never having children of her own, many of them considered her a "second mom."