



## Reneé Christine Gayhardt

February 5, 1928 - March 4, 2014

Reneé Christine Gayhardt was born Rebecca Christine Owens February 5, 1928 in Ashdown, Arkansas to John Corbin Owens and Anna Jones. Reneé was the older of two children born to this union. While in Arkansas, Reneé attended Little River Training Academy. Following the death of their parents, the two sisters were welcomed into the family home that was jointly owned by their father, grandmother, and Uncle Chester. The two were raised by Uncle Chester and his wife Frances along with several cousins in a warm and loving home where their grandmother also resided. Reneé had fond memories of her years with Uncle Chester, Aunt Frances, her grandmother and the cousins who were more like siblings (Gus, Chester, Colleen, Uriel, Virginia, William, Sandra and Delores).

In 1942 Reneé moved with the family to Kansas City, Missouri where she attended Lincoln High School. As a student she excelled academically and socially. She went on to receive a bachelor's degree from Emporia State Teacher's College in Kansas City.

After college Reneé moved to Los Angeles, CA where she married L.C. Templeton of Longview, Texas in 1951. To this union one child, Wayne Kurt was born in 1953. The couple divorced in 1954. In 1956 she married Scott Laurence Gayhardt Jr. of El Paso, Texas. To this union four children were born, Cheryl Lynn who died shortly after birth, Renee Claudet, Scott Laurence

III, and Ronald Corbin. The two would remain married until her husband's passing in 2004.

While in Los Angeles, Reneé worked as an educator and director in the Head Start program. Reneé had a gift where teaching was concerned. While most teachers focused on the children in their care, Reneé had a family centered approach to education. Choosing to focus on the total child and deliberately developing close relationships with entire families, many would describe her as being innovative and ahead of her time. She regularly encouraged the parents of her students to enroll in college. Many of them did and many of them graduated. Those parents continued to call her periodically over the years with expressions of gratitude. Reneé was also involved in many political endeavors. She was an active member on many committees within the Los Angeles chapter of the Democratic Party.

Reneé and Scott moved their young family to Fremont, CA in 1974, where she would remain until her death. While in Fremont, Reneé worked for Mervyn's Department Store as an accounts manager in their corporate offices. It was a job that she only planned on keeping for a short time however she excelled at it, made many friends, and remained there until her retirement.

Reneé loved traveling to exotic places with family friends Leon and Yvonne. While most tourists visited the popular attractions, Reneé busied herself with getting to know the locals, visiting the schools, and spending time with the people. Reneé's other interests included reading, discussing politics, and cooking. More than anything she enjoyed conversing with daughter Renee daily for hours at a time. The two were best friends.

Her biggest accomplishments occurred in her role as mother and grandmother. Reneé was proud of her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. She spoke highly of them to anyone who was willing to listen

and even to a few who weren't. She had an expectation of excellence that went unquestioned by her offspring.

Reneé was “every woman.” She worked in the home and out, and she made it appear effortless. She was the consummate voice of reason, a soft and welcoming presence. She was a self-proclaimed “positive thinker” who believed in speaking life into people and situations. In the eyes of many she was a role model, a trailblazer, and a visionary. To her family she was simply “mom” and “grandma.”

Reneé was preceded in death by her husband Scott Laurence Gayhardt Jr.; daughters: Cheryl Lynn Gayhardt, and Renee Gayhardt-Bell (Chris); sister Eleanor, and both parents. She is survived by sons: Wayne Templeton (Diane), Scott Gayhardt III (Sherell), and Ronald Gayhardt (Sondra); grandchildren: Akilah Templeton, Zalikah Templeton, Emerald Templeton, Christopher Bell, Jonathan Bell, Lauryn Gayhardt, Scott Gayhardt, Tanisha Thomas, Eric Brooks, Donnel Swoffard, Latisha Swoffard, and Sean Moore; great-grandchildren: Shoni Bennett, Malik Brinston, Day Bennett, Mannasseh Bennett, Zaire “Christine” Bennett, and Zion Bennett; niece Gloria Bennett, and nephew Jeff Wesson. She will be missed by a host of relatives and friends.

A Celebration of Life will be held on Friday, March 14, 12pm at Fremont Memorial Chapel, 3723 Peralta Blvd., Fremont, CA 94536. Private burial at San Joaquin Valley National Cemetery in Gustine, CA.

# Cemetery Details

## **San Joaquin Valley National Cemetery**

32053 W. McCabe Road  
Santa Nella, CA 95322

# Tribute Wall



“ 10 files added to the album *Memories Album*



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**Fremont Memorial Chapel** - March 12, 2014 at 05:26 PM



“ 2 files added to the album *Memories Album*



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**Fremont Memorial Chapel** - March 11, 2014 at 11:50 AM