



Gwen Gallegos Bylinsky

September 20, 1927 - September 30, 2022

Gwen Gallegos Bylinsky

Gwen Gallegos Bylinsky, 95, died at home Friday, September 30 in Fort Collins, Colo., surrounded by friends and family. Gwen, the firstborn child of Manuel “Lito” Gallegos and Carmela Niccoli, was born in a company home on the grounds of the Columbine Mine in Weld County on September 20, 1927.

When she was five years old, Gwen’s family moved to Denver. Gwen grew up within walking distance of St. John’s School, which she attended through 8th grade. It was early in life when she found her voice. “I was always singing and driving my mother crazy,” Gwen remembered. At age 8 or 9, her mother found a teacher for Gwen, and she began singing lessons with Madame De Costa and became a member of her Children’s Opera Class. As a teenager, she regularly sang at 11 o’clock Mass at Holy Ghost Church. During the war years, Gwen often sang at Fitzsimons General Hospital in the wards for wounded soldiers. After graduating from St. Mary’s Academy in 1945, Gwen began her vocal studies with Florence Lamont Hinman. In 1946 she was selected as a student singer member of the Central City Opera ensemble, where she performed in La Traviata and The Abduction of the Seraglio. The following year she was a soloist with the Denver Symphony Orchestra at the Elitch Gardens Pops Concert in July. Around the same time, she performed with the Lamont Singers at Red Rocks.

Gwen continued her vocal studies at Louisiana State University after graduating from The Lamont School of Music of the University of Denver. She fell in love with Louisiana, and that's where she fell in love with Gene Bylinsky. They married in Denver in August 1955. Around this time, Gwen applied her talent as a natural storyteller to learning the craft of writing and magazine production. In Louisiana, she worked for The Register, a Baton Rouge society magazine. In addition to being a 'Girl Friday', Gwen had the opportunity to write for the magazine and design ads. She later worked as a society editor for the Baton Rouge Morning Advocate/State Times; as an editor for Dallas Fashion and Sportswear in Dallas, Tex.; and as a reporter for Pacific Shipper, a magazine based in San Francisco. One of her most memorable jobs was working as a typist for fashion publicist Eleanor Lambert in New York City. Soon after starting her new job, Gwen had a surge of nervousness. Here she was, in the big city, working for the famous and intimidating Eleanor Lambert! She couldn't make her fingers type without making mistake after mistake. Each time she made a typo, she used a new sheet of Miss Lambert's expensive stationery. Not wanting to be found out, Gwen stuffed the used stationery in her purse to carry home. Miss Lambert never learned of Gwen's mishap.

Once Gene and Gwen had children, she changed her focus and dedicated herself to her two children. In addition to her love, she gave her children a strong work ethic and an appreciation for the beauty in life – music, art and literature.

Gwen never forgot her early childhood in the coal mining camps and her family's struggles during the Great Depression. She recalled one Christmas when her father struggled to save for a gift to put under the tree. He walked to work and saved the money he would have spent for streetcar fare to buy a wooden hobby horse for his daughter. At a young age, Gwen knew there

wasn't a Santa Claus. It was only at age fourteen, when her family was doing better financially, that Gwen received and learned to ride her first bicycle.

Gwen was generous to those in need and spent many years volunteering. As a teenager, she served as a candy striper at a Denver hospital, where she helped apply hot moist towels to the paralyzed limbs of polio victims. While living in Connecticut, she volunteered at Neighbor to Neighbor, a food pantry, and served on the Greenwich Board of Social Services and the Service Advisory Committee. Her passion was grassroots Democratic politics. In her early years of motherhood, she put her two children in a stroller and walked door-to-door, campaigning for candidates. Later, she became chair of the Democratic Women's Club and the Democratic Town Committee. In 1996 she ran for office as the Democrat candidate for State Representative 151st District. Although Gwen never won a race in the overwhelmingly a Republican district, she put her heart and soul into representing the Democrat minority.

Gwen was a proud daughter of a Spanish American father and an Italian mother, both southern Colorado natives. After many years away from her birthplace, Gwen returned to Colorado at age 80 to live near her daughter and family in Fort Collins.

Gwen was fiercely loyal to family, friends and those who helped her in her home. In return, she had especially loyal friends and family who looked forward to spending time with her every day. Her humor, positive outlook, and her colorful stories left an especially strong impact on her grandchildren, friends and those who cared for her in her last decade of life.

She was predeceased by her husband of over 50 years, Gene Michael Bylinsky, and by two brothers, Lito "Junior" Gallegos, and Harold Gallegos. She is survived by two brothers, Joseph Gallegos of Denver and Donald

Gallegos of Littleton; her son Gregory Bylinsky and his wife, Mae Hsieh; her daughter Tanya B. Fabian and son-in-law Chris Fabian; and six grandchildren.

Previous Events

Rosary

OCT **14.** 1:30 PM - 2:00 PM (MT)

St. Joseph Catholic Church
300 W Mountain Ave
Ft. Collins, CO 80521

Funeral Mass

OCT **14.** 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM (MT)

St. Joseph Catholic Church
300 W Mountain Ave
Ft. Collins, CO 80521

Graveside Service

OCT **15.** 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM.

Mount Olivet Cemetery

Tribute Wall

DC

“ Tanya and family and Gregory and family. I so blessed to have your mom in my life. We had the best time. I'll never forget Gwenie's stories they will stay on n my heart forever. One story I'll never forget was Gwenie and we're watching opera and I started singing and Gwenie looked at me and said not to quit my day job. I laughed so hard because she was my day job. Harper your caring heart, Clay being strong, Rosa being smart, Pilar for your love of music, Gigi your smile and writing, James your wit and good looks. Your grandma loved you a lot. Thank you with all my love Dori Carroll

Dori Carroll - October 07, 2022 at 12:21 PM