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## Margaret Dalton



Feb 4, 1945 - Mar 14, 2018

Margaret Dalton, a delightful, artistically gifted, and beloved teacher for nearly 40 years passed away peacefully last month in the company of loving friends.

She and her sister Geraldine grew up in Durham, California, a rural community outside Chico, on the 2,000-acre ranch of her father, Vernon Fish. Margaret spent her teen years in Chico, graduating from high school in 1962.

After two years at Colorado Women's College in Denver, she transferred to San Francisco State, where she earned her BA and teaching credential in 1967, and began what would be a lifelong career guiding, nurturing and inspiring small children.

Ms. Dalton, who was known as Miss Margaret to thousands of youngsters and parents, began in the Head Start program at a preschool in an underserved West Oakland neighborhood. After three years she moved to Glorietta School in Orinda, where she taught kindergarten for nine years. In 1979 she began her tenure at the White Pony and Meher Schools, teaching third grade, kindergarten and - toward the end of her career - the youngest children in the preschool until her retirement in 2017. For several years before retirement, she chose not to collect a salary, donating her time instead.

According to those that worked with her, she brought her wonderful artistic sensibilities into her work with little ones, cultivating their creativity by patiently teaching them to express themselves through the medium of paint. She was an inspiration to younger teachers, who marveled at her ability to prepare art projects with love, beauty and respect. Her friends and students knew that beneath her quiet exterior was a lively, elfin, playful quality that endeared her to children and adults alike.

Her former principal, Ellen Evans said, "Margaret's devotion to her students was exemplary, as were her standards for their care. Her preschool art table was a place of joy and inspiration. She is missed."

A private service was held recently with close friends in attendance.

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