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## Frances Jane "Pat" Kessler



On Monday, November 19, 2018, Frances Jane "Pat" Kessler, loving wife and mother of three children, passed away at age 82.

Pat was born on February 4, 1936 in Fresno, California to Clarinda and William Phillips. She received her BSN in nursing jointly from UC San Francisco and Berkeley in 1958 and was a practicing nurse specializing in public health newborn care for the County of Alameda for many years. On September 5, 1956 she married John Berthold Kessler in Yosemite National Park. They raised one daughter Ellie, and two sons, Bill and Steve.

Pat had many passions not the least of which was being a leader in the community and in business. She was a tireless advocate for women's rights. She was an entrepreneur who started the successful gift store, Lighting Bug Gifts. Pat was a Girl Scout Leader for Ellie thru high school. She was president of the Parent Teacher Associations for Sleepy Hollow School, Orinda Intermediate School and Miramonte High School. She ushered in the first on campus Grad Night at Miramonte High School in 1987. She organized and ran the All Orinda Swim Meet in the early 1980's. She was a founder of Lamorinda National Bank and sat on their Board of Directors before it was acquired by US Bank. She was President of the American Association of University Women (AAUW). She was a fierce champion of public education and strong supporter of the

University of California system. She rose to be the leader of the General Alumni Association for UC Berkeley and eventually became a Regent for the University of California. In her later years, she devoted much time to the Assistance League of Sacramento helping those less fortunate in the community. Her ability to find common ground and solve problems within the organizations she led or in which she participated is the collaborative trait for which she will be remembered most.

Pat's unique upbringing in the Yosemite Valley carried with her throughout her life. Her love of nature and the mountains was strong. She was an avid and beautiful skier. She hiked and fly fished. She doted on her husband of over 50 years until his passing in 2013. She loved to travel and learn about other cultures. Her favorite place, aside from Yosemite, was Lake Tahoe where she enjoyed having a second home for over 30 years. She was adored by all who knew her especially her family.

Pat was preceded in death by her husband, John. She is survived by her three children and six grandchildren. Donations in Pat's name may be made to The Yosemite Conservancy or AAUW STEM program in Auburn CA <https://auburn-ca.aauw.net/>. A Celebration of Life will be held on April 13h at the home of longtime family friend, Barbara Conley. Please contact Ellie Kessler Vierra for further information at 916-591-8771 or [ellievierra@gmail.com](mailto:ellievierra@gmail.com).

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[back](#)

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