



## Lois Elaine Sweany

April 29, 1926 - May 24, 2018

Lois Elaine Davidson Sweany of Portland Oregon passed peacefully in her sleep during the early morning of May, 24th 2018 at St Vincent Hospital in Portland Oregon.

Lois was born April 29th 1926, in Rochester Minnesota, daughter of Dr. Thorold Edward Davidson and Gertrude Sarah Kreimeier. After completion of her father's fellowship at the Mayo Clinic, the family relocated to Mason City Iowa where her little brother Teddy was born in the July Iowa heat. Lois had a deep affection and admiration for her father. She spoke of it her entire life. Lois was a daddy's girl.

Lois was born into a world where gender roles were deeply defined and societal adherence was given without question. It is no surprise that after graduation from Mason City High school in 1944, that Lois continued her education in Home Economics at Lindenwood College in St Louis, which was an all-girls college at the time. Lois went on to attend Iowa State University at Ames and then finally graduated with a degree in Home Economics from the University of Iowa.

Lois married her high school sweetheart, Robert (Bob) Leslie Sweany upon his return from Marine Corps service in 1947. Lois and Robert brought 6 children into the world during the period of 1948 to 1967. The new family had its genesis in the corn fields of Iowa but continued to expand as it migrated to Portland Oregon in 1960, to Los Angeles in 1965 and then onto Detroit in 1970. Throughout, Lois was a loving, self-sacrificing and gentle mother; an

impeccable homemaker, administrator and master seamstress. Parenting was her first and most steadfast mission in life.

Toward the end of the 1960s while living in Los Angeles, Lois began to feel a different calling...an entrepreneurial calling. Polyesters and knits were just beginning to be introduced into fashion. Lois began learning a process of sewing with synthetic textiles called (Stretch & Sew), a term coined by Anne Person, the founder of Stretch & Sew Fabrics who was at the time, working out of her home in Eugene Oregon. Lois, with the support of her husband bought a franchise store and opened it in East Detroit Mi. Robert suggested to Lois that they name the corporation "Creative Woman Inc." DBA Stretch & Sew Fabrics. She approved. Lois and her 20 + employees sold synthetic fabrics, patterns and taught many of Detroit's women the "Stretch & Sew" technique for more than a decade. As quickly as the Polyester fad had come, it went. In 1982, not long after Stretch and Sew had run its course, Lois and Bob relocated their family to Corvallis Oregon. In Corvallis, Lois decided to offer her entrepreneurial experience to Junior Achievement (JA) and ultimately served as the Corvallis Director of JA for over 5 years. To this day her former JA students continue to correspond with Lois over Facebook. In 1994 at the age of 68, Lois, thinking she might be too old, submitted a resume to Goodwill industries of Oregon. She was surprised when they offered her the manager position at the Corvallis store on Kings Boulevard. By the age of 70 Lois was a regional manager of the Good will outlets in Corvallis, Albany, Salem, Keizer and McMinnville. Upon her retirement from Goodwill there was an enormous outpouring of love and adulation from her managers, assistants and staff. She was beloved. In Lois's world, people were never greater or less than. People were not a number or a variable in some success formulation. Lois saw value in everyone. She treated people of every creed, color, shape, size and from whatever life circumstance with the same respect and acceptance. No subject was beyond taboo and no transgression was beyond her capacity for forgiveness. The secret to her success it seemed was in her ability to be a friend. It was never apparent that her demonstration was the result of

something that had been learned or instilled but rather due to something innate; something preexisting; something that was there from the beginning. Lois was eloquently simple, authentic and without pretense. She was real. We, who have loved Lois and have been blessed by her loving us, bid her farewell. Her beautiful presence; her amazing wit; contagious laughter; her love of flowers and children and her incredible ability to recall and retell stories of the extraordinary life that she lived, will be sorely missed. We love you mom....Until we meet again, great soul!