



Zorka Simnjanovski

September 8, 1954 - July 24, 2020

Zorka (Zora) Simnjanovski was born on September 8, 1954 in Macedonia (Former Yugoslav Republic). She ascended into heaven, peacefully, on July 24, 2020 at 10:00am holding the hands of her husband, Djoko and son, Riste, after suffering cardiac arrest on the evening of July 23, 2020. She was preceded in death by her parents, Rade and Stojna, brothers, Blago, Mitko and Vanco, and youngest son, Brian. Zorka is survived by her husband, Djoko, son, Riste, daughter-in-law, Lauren and grandson, Uriah.

Her parents, Rade Nikolich and Stojna Nikolik, had 4 children: Blago, Mitko, Vanco and Zorka. Zorka moved to the United States in her late teens and met Djoko, her husband of 45 years, after a trip back to Yugoslavia. Zorka worked a variety of jobs as a child caretaker for close family (Mirjana and Spaso and their wonderful children), a factory worker, and in the grocery industry with Nelson's Market (a family-owned grocery store) and Ralphs. She worked at Ralphs for several decades and would often come home joyous about having the opportunity to work in a place where, "...all her friends came to see her each week." It was a regular occurrence to see Ralphs customers waiting in line for Zorka while other lines remained open. Rumor has it that often customers would reply, after being asked if they would like to move to an open line, "...I'll wait for Zorka, thank you."

Her friends were not only of Slavic descent, but also neighbors, church friends, community members, family and customers whom she developed deep and meaningful relationships.

When Zorka came to the United States, one of her first "American" friends was Debbie. They worked together at Nelson's Market, nearly 50 years ago. Zorka had three brothers and would refer to Debbie as "her sister" to those she met when together, and especially when introducing Debbie to her family from back home. Zorka will be remembered as having accepted Debbie into her own family, and for sharing stories of their children and grandchildren as they navigated life together.

Zorka loved to cook, specifically bake. She, and her close friend, Trpana, would share

recipes, cook or bake elaborate and traditional dishes, and share stories of their children and grandchildren. The two women were known to not only have been the best of friends but also to have been kind to others. Zorka enjoyed helping those in need and was an amazing wife, mother, daughter, sibling, grandmother, and friend.

Life will be difficult to imagine without Zorka. One example of this is with Stefan, Vesna and their children. They, as many others will as well, recall fond memories of Zorka being there for every celebration (birthdays and graduations), but also there during the most difficult of times. Zorka was genuine in her care, compassion, and empathy for others. This was illustrated by anyone who stopped by (unannounced) to visit her while at home. Within a few minutes, she could whip up a complete meal with desserts...with a caveat of, "...I'm trying this recipe out, tell me what you think." Alexander (their son) would say, "I don't want to eat too much for dinner because I know Zora will have something really good to eat and I want to have room." Their running joke was that Alexander wanted her as his private chef when she retired.

Zorka loved her family. She admired and respected her husband, Djoko, and worked to help him build two successful businesses during their decades together. After working long hours, Zorka was known to come home and assist with the business's payroll; she was remarkable in all she did. The two were an inseparable pair in all aspects of life. The two tended to an elaborate garden that they had cultivated annually (some sections included heirloom seeds/plants which spanned generations).

She met the love of her life, Djoko Simnjanovski, by chance at an event in a local village while in their early twenties. The story goes that Djoko knew that, "...she was the one." Several days later, after running into one another, on several occasions (Note: this may have been more of Djoko's planning than pure coincidence), Djoko brought Zorka to meet Mara, Djoko's mother. Mara, who was known not to allow girls into the home, immediately hugged Zorka and said to her, "...you are my daughter-in-law." Several days later, the three of them took a train into the city to select a ring, and the two were subsequently married. Zorka accepted Lauren, as her daughter-in-law, in the same way, several decades later.

Zorka traveled back to the United States while Djoko stayed in Yugoslavia to complete the appropriate paperwork. They wrote letters to one another while apart. Djoko described this time as, "...the only time we've ever been apart for more than a day during our marriage." Djoko and Zorka had a deep and profound love for one another. Additionally, they took pride in their adopted home country of the United States and were thrilled when they became citizens.

While in the United States, Zorka and Djoko had two sons, Riste and Brian. Her children enjoyed a fantastic childhood, which was surrounded by loving and hardworking parents. The home environment she and Djoko built was one without entitlement or extravagant gifts, but rather, a home rooted in hard work, discipline, and a deep love of God. She taught her children to work hard, treat others better than they wished to be treated, and to put more into the world than they took out.

One of her favorite memories, after the passing of her son, Brian, was hearing the news that she would be a grandmother (“Baba” in Macedonian). Zorka and Lauren spent many hours in the kitchen together and loved sharing stories of, “...what Riste and Brian were like as kids” and comparing them to Uriah. Zorka accepted and loved Lauren as her own daughter. Lauren sought her for advice, wisdom, and recipes.

She was a blessing to everyone that knew her and she was a treasure to those that she loved and cared for.

She will be greatly missed; however, her memory to all that she touched with her kindness, love, and empathy will live on for generations.

Thank you for taking the time to remember Zorka, if you’re reading this, rest easy in knowing that she loved you too.

If you have images or stories you would like to share, you can email them to her son, Riste at: riste@verizon.net

Cemetery

Oak Hill Memorial Park

2640 Glenridge Rd

Escondido, CA, 92027

Comments



“ I'll miss you very much my friend Zorka, you were a truly friend to worked with. You were always happy at work, always had a beautiful smile and greet every customer very friendly. The years that I worked with you were fun, smiling all the time. Your gave me great advices for my kids. And when ever my kids had fundraisers you were always there to support them or sometimes you would give them money for any coming event for soccer tournaments. When we shopped at Ralphs you would always gave hugs to my boys and girl and ever sense your retirement we had missed you a lot because there hasn't been anybody cashier like you there Friendly, funny, loving, tenderness, happy, beautiful inside and outside and always smiling . We will truly going to miss you my dearest friend. You'll always be in our hearts rest in peace my good friend. The Family Vega.



Lorena Vega - 3 hours ago



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Zorka Simnjanovski.



August 03 at 12:11 PM



“ I will always remember Vujna Zora as a woman who loved her family to no end. Every decision had her children's well-being in mind. Needless to say, she adored her children and lived every moment for them. She was a devoted wife who had a strong marriage because she poured into it daily. She was a generous and gracious hostess of her inviting home. When anyone came over for a visit, she would make you feel like family by cooking incredible food and listening to stories of your life with sincere attentiveness. She gave so much of herself to others, and received so much in return by the connection and fulfillment it gave her. Vujna Zora left this world a better place because her foundation was anchored in love. I am honored to have known her my whole life and truly believe she is healed and in heavenly peace.

~ Zaklina "Jeki" Jones



Zaklina - August 03 at 10:59 AM



“ Zora came to America with our parents when she was 14 in 1969. Her father was our dad's brother. Chicho Rade her father asked my dad to please take his daughter to America so she would have a better life. Zora was our nanny for a decade and a half. Some of our memories with her were swimming in the pool, braiding our hair, bathing us, cooking and I used to call her mama. Our mom Miryana used to say she has 4 daughters not 3. She is the kindest person you could ever meet. She will be greatly missed and we love her so much! Ryka



Ryka Milovanovski - July 31 at 04:25 PM



“ My deepest sympathy to Zorka family. I asked about her about a month ago when I was at Ralph's and they had told me she retired. I was happy for her because she was such a hard working person who always had a smile for everyone. I found out about her passing and I am deeply sad to hear that she did not get to enjoy a longer retirement. She may have taken the smile to heaven but we will not forget her kindness on earth.

God bless

Charlene (a Ralph's customer who knew her for many years.)



Charlene - July 31 at 04:00 PM



“ 7 files added to the tribute wall



Riste Simnjanovski - July 31 at 12:20 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Zorka Simnjanovski.



July 30 at 05:56 PM



“ наше најдубље саучешће
My heart aches to hear this news. I'm praying for everyone.
There is no greater loss than losing a child just as well losing a mother, wife and best friend. That is what this wonderful woman (Zorka) was.
The day I met her on my wedding day in 1978 she was my Staro Svatica and befriended me. I will never forget our lovely memories we had as the kids played together and our church gatherings.
Love you and family!! prayers to you Riste and Djoko!
Words can't describe how sorry I am at this loss. You're in my prayers.
my number if you need anything 760.212.7682
God Bless All
Dusanka Simovski
Mile Simovski
Alexandar & Miroslav Simovski



Dusanka Simovski - July 29 at 09:13 PM



“ Mile, Dusanka, Alexandar, Miroslav Simovski purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Zorka Simnjanovski.



Mile, Dusanka, Alexandar, Miroslav Simovski - July 29 at 08:57 PM



“ 2 files added to the tribute wall



Riste Simnjanovski - July 29 at 12:35 AM



“ My mom and I first met Zorka eight years ago at Ralph's. We became instant friends with this extraordinary, wonderful woman. Zorka was one of the kindest and most warm, caring, and loving souls we've ever had the privilege of knowing. We were lucky enough to have our friendship with Zorka extend outside of Ralph's, and we will always treasure the special times and moments we spent together.

Anyone who came into contact with Zorka immediately loved her. This was apparent for anyone who'd ever seen Zorka on the job at Ralph's. While she always had a FULL line of customers waiting for Zorka and Zorka only... all the other lines were empty. This was the usual scene at Ralph's.

We wish Zorka's family our love and support during these times. She will stay in our hearts forever.

Sincerely and with love,

Brigette and Chris

BP - July 27 at 07:46 PM



“ Dear Family of Zorka,
I just heard about the passing of your beloved mother, I am deeply saddened by this news my deepest sympathies for Riskie and jocko. She was a wonderful kind, special woman cared a lot about people. I lived next door to her for 10 years.
Jim and Linda
Stephanie Cummings



Linda Cummings - July 27 at 07:16 PM



“ Zorka.. although I didn't know you personally, you were always so kind to me when I would be checking out at Ralph's. My sincere sympathies to your family and friends. I will miss your kindness and warm greetings.

Jessica Ruelas - July 27 at 05:27 PM