Jane Keeling Barnes, 1920-2001

A fourth generation Lake County resident and descendant of pioneer families, Jane Keeling was born in Lakeport, attended local schools, and graduated from Clear Lake High School in 1937 where her interests included sports and playing saxophone in the school orchestra and marching band.

She later attended Mills College in Oakland, Santa Rosa Junior College and Healds Business College, worked for the IRS in San Francisco prior to World War II, and started her family in Lake County after the war. Jane and her first husband, Royal Dorsett, along with her father, H. Vincent Keeling, and her brother, Venn Keeling, were instrumental in the development of the Holiday Harbor/Lake Builders Supply/Texaco service station on Highway 20 in Nice during the mid-1940s. Jane and Royal were also involved in converting the Arizona desert into productive land for growing cotton, in a project sponsored by Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co., where they assumed leadership in the new agricultural community of Litchfield Park.

After Royal’s death from polio in 1949, Jane returned to Lake County and in 1951 married Victor D. Barnes of Kelseyville. They combined their families and raised four children at The Barnes Yard, a diversified farming operation growing hay, walnuts, wine grapes, and kiwifruit on the ranch between Nice and Lucerne.

While their children attended Upper Lake schools, Jane and Vic supported their involvement in sports, band, 4-H, Rainbow for Girls, DeMolay for Boys, along with other community and school activities, assisting them in achieving leadership positions. Jane attended all the sports activities at the elementary and high school and helped with refreshment stands and other fundraising projects. She was a Cub Scout leader for several years and a sewing instructor for the Nice 4-H Club.

When no men were available in the mid-1950s, Jane took on coaching duties for the Lu-Ni Lions Little League baseball team, with support from the Clear Lake Lions Club members in Lucerne and Nice. Practices were held at the [now] Hinman Park in Nice, with games played at the [former] Lucerne Elementary School. Her sons, Pete and Ken, participated for several years on Little League and Pony League teams. Her daughters, Wilda and Susie, were enthusiastic attendees at the games, with Susie taking on “bat girl” tasks for more than one season.

Jane’s community involvement extended to chairing the citizens committee which supported and created the Northwest Clear Lake Regional Wastewater System dedicated in 1974, the forerunner to the Basin 2000 project and subsequent development of The Geysers for steam generation through use of treated effluent.

Her other affiliations included the Order of the Eastern Star, service for over a decade as Grand Deputy for the California Grand Assembly for Rainbow Girls, charter member of the Lake County Chapter of California Women for Agriculture, and leadership roles in the Diamond Walnut Growers and the Kiwifruit Growers of California.

Jane and Vic were strong and consistent supporters of youth activities and programs. Westside Community Park became a favorite philanthropic project of Vic’s after Jane’s death. He believed in its purpose and its potential value to the community at large. Vic’s initial donations to the Park project were solicited by Charlie Jolin, who had a long-time association with the Keeling family. The Keeling-Barnes Family Foundation has continued its financial support for and encouragement of the Park development since Vic’s death in 2005.

Wilda Shock Susie LaPointe Keeling-Barnes Family Foundation 2012

Pete Dorsett Ken Barnes