

Words of Life

Piecemakers Country Store
1720 Adams Avenue
Costa Mesa, CA 92626
(714) 641-3112
mail@piecemakers.com

January — March 2012 Word

LIFE

Every living thing on Earth has been given a gift from God called life: The good Lord giveth and the good Lord taketh away. It comes and it goes and what we do with it is up to us. Like a flower in a flower garden we can become one of the many, beautifying the entire garden, or we can make ourselves outstanding, enhancing our looks. In our self love, instead of adding beauty to the garden we look like some odd weed. So we take our commodity called life and continue to give it away by reaching out and helping others. It is then that we reflect the beauty of our Creator who not only gives us life, but continually nourishes it by giving of Himself. As God's eye is scanning America I wonder if He is pondering what has gone awry.

I love to hear the cawing of the crows and observe the beauty of them all flying together in a flock, flying in harmony, listening and obeying the orchestrator. Their sensitivity to the maimed and the helpless shame the human race. One day I watched as a crow took his food and

gave it to another with a broken leg while others gave the giver of food their food — all sharing with one another like a single unit. How far the human race has strayed from the simplicity of life. Giving unto others should be a natural part our nature with no ulterior motives.

“As we give unto others it will be given unto us, filled up, pressed down and running over.”

Our giving should be the running over, with no ulterior motive. The grace that once covered America made her a nation, in a sense, sustaining the whole world. We have fallen from grace and have become a nation of leeches, money hungry killers, greedy and heartless. Will we repent and change our ways or be wiped off the map as some countries already have been?

The Lord giveth grace to the humble but He also taketh away if we become proud and arrogant.

Marie

Marie Kolasinski



Still Jazzing It Up at 99 (from the Daily Pilot newspaper)



Piecemakers Country Store in Costa Mesa throws 99th birthday bash to Viola Smith, a pioneer female drummer who gained popularity during World War II.

Anyone who watched entertainment reels in the 1930s and '40s might know Viola Smith.

A musical pioneer, she was one of the first female professional drummers, gaining popularity during World War II.

On Friday, her past performances played in black and white on the TV screen at the Piecemakers Country Store in Costa Mesa, where her cousin Marie Kolasinski threw Smith a 99th birthday party.

Smith said she'd only met her cousin a handful of times but that Kolasinski, 90, insisted that she make a stop at the store while in Southern California. With a hand-painted banner at the door, a three-tiered candlelit cake and a live band, Smith had no idea what was waiting for her when she arrived.

"My goodness, what a celebration!" she said as she prepared to blow out the candles. "I cannot believe this."

Growing up in a large family in Mount Calvary, Wis., Smith said all her siblings were encouraged to be musical. Each played the piano and sometimes more than one instrument. The eight sisters also started an orchestra. While most dropped out, Smith and her sister Mildred kept going, starting the 12-piece all-female orchestra, the Coquettes, in the '30s.

"I had the field pretty much to myself," Smith said. "There weren't many girl drummers."

When World War II broke out, female musicians started to be taken more seriously, she said.

"Before World War II there was great prejudice," she said. "The war overcame it to an extent. They could finally see what girl musicians could do. They were finally given a chance."

She joined Phil Spitalny's all-female orchestra soon after and appeared in such films as 1945's "Here

Come the Co-Eds" featuring Bud Abbott and Lou Costello.

In the 1960s she joined the Kit Kat Band, an orchestra band, for the Broadway musical "Cabaret" and for TV shows such as CBS's "I've Got a Secret."

As the Piecemakers chorus sang songs to celebrate the big day Friday, eager fans came by to congratulate her. One pointed out that some of the women dressed surprisingly "risque" back then.

"Thank you," Smith said.

Another fan dropped by and pointed out Smith's style with her high "toms" drums.

Although she started the fad, Smith said she got the idea from a drummer she saw in Texas.

Smith had a sense of humor when the chorus suggested they sing a love song.

"About my love life?" the single lady said with a laugh. "That's a secret."

Smith now spends most of her time in New York City, where she has an apartment and was a familiar face for many years.

When asked about longevity, she says she's had two glasses of red wine a day since 1962, exercises and always takes her vitamins.

Although everyone was eager for her to get behind the drums, Smith said she hasn't played since she put down her drumsticks at age 66.

However, as she talked about playing, Smith raised her hands in the hair, tapping at imaginary cymbals and high toms, proving that the passion doesn't wane with age. (written by Joanna Clay)

