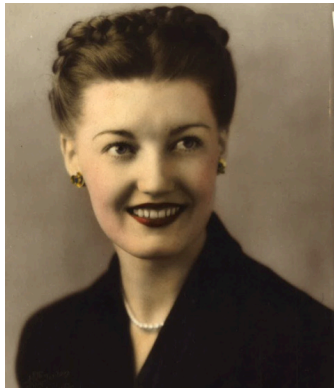




Rhea Decker Seaberg

August 4, 1927 - April 24, 2022
Lehi, Utah



Rhea Decker Seaberg, beloved mother, widow, grandmother, and paragon of independent thought and existence, passed away peacefully early Sunday morning, April 24, 2022 at age 94, having lived a long and fulfilling life. She joins her eternal companion, Dr. John J. Seaberg, Jr., who preceded her in death by 10 years.

Rhea was born Rhea Decker in 1927 to Edgar and Myrtle

Decker, early settlers to the San Luis Valley in Southern Colorado. Rhea was the first of three siblings, all occupying a one-room farmhouse in the small town of La Jara. It was on this farm that Rhea developed the resilience and independence that defined her life.

After completing high school as WWII ended, her father encouraged her to broaden her life experience and pursue work outside the San Luis Valley. She moved to Minnesota and qualified as a medical technologist. Upon returning to Colorado and heartened by receiving a scholarship, she earned a double degree in biology and English at Adams State College.

During this time, Rhea also participated in church choir. Somehow, John, her husband to be, a brash multi-sport college athlete who was not a church goer nor musically inclined, boldly forged his way into participating in the choir, with the sole objective to meet Rhea. John described Rhea as "elegant, sharp-dressed, practical, and beautiful." Her life skills complemented his talents. They married in 1951. John often commented they made a "great team." Rhea became a mother and educator, always finding ways to satisfy her desire for lifelong learning and self-development while being a loving, faithful companion to John for 61 years.

Rhea never let circumstance determine her destiny. Rather, she lived according to her values, always dutifully "doing things the right way" throughout her 94 years, flourishing wherever she lived. Rhea supported John in the many moves required by his coaching, school system administration, and higher education career. In each locale, she found work as a medical technologist or as a high school teacher of English, advanced Biology, Chemistry, or Anatomy/Physiology across the states of Colorado, New Mexico, and Oklahoma. Mid-career, she earned her master's degree in chemistry from Oklahoma University to "up her game," as many of her students planned to pursue professions in medicine or science. Post her retirement, she enjoyed many invitations of her former students to visit their work venues. If we listed former student names, you would recognize many as well-known leaders in various fields of medicine, science and higher education.

Consistent with her work life, she also provided home learning and work opportunities and instilled high expectations of performance, so her three boys became

educated and also adopted her insatiable curiosity for learning and finding truth. She applied her chemistry and science knowledge to make unique and tasty home recipes (breads, cookies, unique sauces, gravy and canned goods were among many specialties). She prided herself on always maintaining a clean and orderly home (no stain could escape her customized chemical removal systems). As late as 2017, Rhea, in her 90th year, enrolled in a Spanish class, so as to "brush up and not forget." She read the Deseret News and Wall Street Journal each day they were delivered to her doorstep until her death.

Rhea maintained a lifelong devotion to her faith, practicing practical religion through service to individuals often overlooked by others. She involved herself in each community in which she lived by supporting local family of the year programs and by being a significant contributor of history to Daughters of Utah Pioneers. She also helped build and maintain the local chapel in Norman, OK. We hypothesize that her kind heart singlehandedly made each Schwan's, Fuller Brush, and Kirby vacuum door-to-door salesman's quota in each town in which she lived. Many in her Oklahoma congregation recall her Sunday lessons where she remade "boring" Old Testament stories into Shakespearean dramas or tragedies to "liven up" doctrinal lessons. Her grandkids still benefit from her skill as a seamstress and playwright by donning the complete complement of elaborate nativity costumes and background murals she made, enabling all to recall her annually as they gather to re-enact and celebrate Christ's birth each Christmas.

She remains an incredible example of devotion, direct speech, work ethic, and a continual desire to learn, to all who knew her.

She is survived by her brother, Edgar Decker, of Montrose, CO and sister, Josephine Flores, of Bountiful, UT; three sons, Dr. John Seaberg III (Wendy) of Columbia, MO, Norman Seaberg (Sherry) of Oklahoma City, OK, and Jim Seaberg (Chris) of Alpine, UT; 10 grandchildren; and 6 1/2 great grandchildren.

A gathering will be held at 9 am, May 20 in American Fork, UT at Warenski Funeral Home, followed by a Memorial and Celebration service at 10 am. Zoom will be provided by accessing <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2810766567>. An online guestbook, with ability to share sentiments and stories is available at www.warenski.com. Burial services will be held May 21 at 10am at the Alamosa, CO Municipal Cemetery.

Although she loved flowers and gardening, in lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to the National Federation of the Blind (Rhea's mother was blind) or LDS Humanitarian Services. As mom would graciously say, "Thank you, and bless you all."

