



Sally Skinner Equinoa

February 16, 1946 - December 5, 2025

Born Sally Bennington Skinner in Palo Alto, California, Sally was the youngest of two children

born to Walter Edward Skinner and Ruth Bernice Bennington Skinner. Sally passed away in San

Luis Obispo, California on December 5, 2025, at the age of 79. She was surrounded by family

and the care team of French Hospital.

Sally was born and raised in Palo Alto, attending public schools from elementary to high school

graduation, a proud graduate of Palo Alto High School or as alumni refer to it "Paly High." She

left home to begin studies at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo in 1963 pursuing a Bachelor of Science

degree majoring in Physical Education and Biology, and continuing graduate studies to receive a

secondary teaching credential. It was in her senior year that she met and married her husband,

Richard, who was also pursuing the same studies and path to a teaching credential. Upon

completion in the summer of 1968, they were both offered teaching positions in the Monterey

area, Sally at Carmel High School and Richard at Pacific Grove High School.

It was a dream
underway. However, the dream only lasted three months when Richard
received a draft notice
ending his teaching assignment while Sally continued to finish her first year
before joining
Richard after basic training in Grand Forks, North Dakota.
It was in Grand Forks that Sally gave birth to the first of three daughters, Amy.
Working mom
from the beginning, Sally accepted a part time teaching position at the
University of North
Dakota while caring for Amy at home. Two plus years later a reassignment
brought the family
back to March AFB, California, and later to be discharged in February 1973. It
was in California
when Sally became an avid consumer of Shaklee nutrition supplements which
later led to an
astonishing five decade career as a representative, director and distributor
bringing service to
many local consumers. All this while still being the devoted mother to Amy,
later Kimberly, and
then Heather. As the children got older and more independent, Sally went
back to the teaching
profession in a slightly different capacity, Religious Education.
For many years Sally taught Religious Education classes locally at the
elementary level.
She later moved on to the Diocese level as a Religious Education Coordinator
then was given
responsibility for the southern deanery of the Diocese of Monterey teacher
preparation and
oversight of education programs. Humorously she would say, all this from a
Convert!! What

made her so admired was that while she was very loyal to catholic teachings she didn't shy away from drawing outside the lines to bring spirituality alive and welcoming to the seeker. She followed Jesus' teaching, all are welcome. She stayed active at the parish level during this time serving in many roles as a Eucharistic Minister, garden door Greeter for Mass, visiting home bound parishioners, and more recently member of the OM Social Justice committee, to name a few.

While there is only one North Star in our solar system, Sally had three to guide her life: Faith, Family and Friendships. Earlier in her ministries she was given a gift, a small statue of Mary,

kneeling, arms extended and open, depicting "I am the Handmaiden of the Lord..." It was placed on her dresser next to the bed and greeted her each morning, a sacred time of her day to reflect and pray throughout her life. Sally's faith was her strength and anchor, in good times and challenging times, and she was loyal to it as anyone could see in her smile and the way she greeted you. These guiding stars were not independent but intertwined. Family and friendships were where she lived her faith. An incredibly devoted mother and grandmother, daughter, sister, and wife, her family and friends brought as much joy to her as she extended to them. She

cherished the life-long friendships that were created locally and far beyond as well.

Sally is survived by her husband of 58 years, Richard; daughters Amy Equinoa (Paco), Kimberly Equinoa (Eric), Heather Sousa (Shawn); grandchildren Amaya and Pablo Alonso, Emma Parent, and Canon, Easton, and Cruz Sousa; Sister Barbara Dore and Michelle Dillard of Nevada, and Richard and Sally's loveable canine companion, Tucker.

Thank you to her devoted care team at UCLA Health Dr. Brian DiCarlo and Mary Okamoto, her Stanford care team of Dr. Pamela Kunz and Dr. George Fisher, her dear friend and caregiver from the beginning, Dr. Heidi Lucas.

A memorial mass is scheduled for Thursday, January 8, 2026 at 10:00am, Old Mission Parish in San Luis Obispo, with a reception to follow in the Parish Hall. Please check the website of Reis Family Mortuary and Crematory, San Luis Obispo, CA, for any updates. In lieu of flowers please consider a donation in her honor to the Hearst Cancer Resource Center c/o French Hospital Medical Center Foundation, The American Heart Association, a social justice cause, or a charity of your choice.

She is passed on from us, yet so present within us. May her spirit find eternal peace.

Previous Events

Funeral Mass

JAN 8. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (PT)

Old Mission Catholic Church
751 Palm St
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

Tribute Wall

R.

“ Regina . planted a grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Sally Skinner Equinoa.

Regina . - January 06 at 02:58 PM

LS

“ Love Always, Stephanie purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of Sally Skinner Equinoa.



Love Always, Stephanie - January 05 at 12:47 PM

LS

“ Love Always, Stephanie planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Sally Skinner Equinoa.

Love Always, Stephanie - January 05 at 12:47 PM

JG

“ Thank you for the photo that lets Sally's spirit shine as she did to us and others and the words that describe her love of family, friends and church. She was and is a treasure as her presence is with us. Jeanie and Andy Greensfelder

Jeanie Greensfelder - December 31, 2025 at 02:51 PM

JG

“ *The English language cannot adequately present the wonderful class-act person that Sally has been. She has been a wonderful friend and example for us in our lives in all she accomplished. She has been a wonderful example and inspiration for us by living with and gracefully facing all the challenges she had in her life.*

Mary and Joe Grimes

Joe Grimes - December 27, 2025 at 10:07 PM

BT

“ *Sally was a part of our reunion group friends for over 25 years. We as couples would get together yearly in either California, Oregon or Washington. Sally always had a smile and she was always so positive and up for any adventure. We will always remember her enjoyment of food. We will miss her greatly. We know her loss leaves a big hole in the heart of Rich and also a big empty space in their home. We send love to Rich and to the family. Words cannot express our sadness.*

*Sincerely,
Bob and Dova Thirsk
Bellingham, WA.*

Bob & Dova Thirsk - December 18, 2025 at 06:19 PM

PS

“ *Sally is Sally and there is no other like her. She leaves a huge hole in our hearts but leaves a bigger gift of her life that fills every hole. Our hearts go out to Rich and all the family. Love from Tim, Patti and the Stalder Family*

patti stalder - December 12, 2025 at 11:29 PM