

## TRULY GREAT-GREAT GRANDMOTHER – Luella Edmond



*Luella Edmond and her daughter Judy.*

As her daughter Judy likes to say, “If my Mom had an education she would have been a millionaire!” Judy proudly adds, “She has so much common sense—always figuring out how things work, and always willing to give something a try.”

Ms. Edmond has had a sometimes hard but rich life raising seven kids—often on her own—and working multiple jobs to support her family. She has lost four of her children. Two died young, and two as adults. However, she is now the proud 82 year-old matriarch of seven grandchildren, six great grandchildren, and one great-great grandchild. The family is planning their first reunion later this summer.

Moreover she is loved and looked after by her community. Recently she attended a Vietnamese neighbor’s wedding. As she says “I did not understand much of what was said, but I had a great time.”

Ms. Edmond moved to Pittsburg California, with her husband and several young children, during World War II. She went to work washing laundry at Camp Stone. After the war, the family moved to Stockton, where the family worked the fields to earn money for school. Then her husband walked out on her. Unable to pay the rent, the family was forced out of their home and taken in by neighbors until she could get back on her feet with several jobs.

Eventually Ms. Edmond made her way to the East Bay, settling in Oakland, with her youngest son. For almost thirty years, Ms. Edmond worked two jobs, one during the day with the Del Monte cannery in Emeryville, and the other in the evening with Grubb and Ellis Real Estate cleaning empty apartments. At Del Monte (where Pixar Studios is now located), she started out splitting peaches and pears for fruit cocktail, eventually worked all parts of the factory from cook room to canning.

For a number of years she and her youngest son had been living in an apartment building that Ms. Edmond managed. (Her other children were adults, eventually moving to Bay Area with their spouses and buying homes near their Mom.) Then in 1979 good fortune came her way. One day her best friend from work said that she had a dream about her. In the dream she was going to win big, and buy a new home. Her friend convinced Ms. Edmond to travel to Reno with her. In Reno she spun the big wheel, and it landed on the jackpot. She won enough money to make the \$1,800 down payment on her current house, and had some money left over for furnishings.

Today the house is paid off, but in need of some TLC repairs. Ms. Edmond retired from Del Monte at 65 in 1987, and now spends time with her family and friends, and stays young by being active.

On Rebuilding Day volunteers from Honey Do Repair, Head Royce School, and Middlebury College Alumni led by Buck de Wolf and Philip Anderson fixed leaky plumbing in the bathroom, painted most of the interior and exterior of house, repaired the front and back porch, and removed debris from the back yard. Another dream day for a truly great-great grandmother.



*Luella’s house after Rebuilding Weekend*