

Bartlett's News Briefs



NOT JUST ANYBODY ([A REMEMBRANCE](#))

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by Pacifican Jean Bartlett, longtime Bay Area News Group writer

THE FABULOUS MISS PAULETTA CRAVOTTO ~ TEACHER OF PACIFICA PRESCHOOLERS, ALL AGES, AND ALL-AROUND FUN MAKER ~ PASSES



Pauletta Cravotto at Pacifica's Senior Center, 2015.

(Jean Bartlett photo.)

Pauletta Cravotto taught preschoolers in Pacifica from September of 1980 until she retired in August of 2012. In 2024, Pauletta explained her teaching technique to this writer.

"My assignment was essentially to teach cooking, arts and crafts and each session was five weeks. My goal was to always try to make something that the children would like because their parents often wanted them to start out with spinach and tofu. I taught them how to make things like cinnamon rolls, pizza, cinnamon toast, cookies, fruit salad, pretzels and quesadillas. We made candy cane cookies and pizza cookies. The sauce for those latter cookies was frosting, which we dyed red, and then we loaded it with a

few gumdrops and it was, in the end, about two inches tall. We did the same thing with art as in cooking – only, they couldn't eat it. My thinking was, they always make it their own way. This was essential in all our sessions but particularly with cooking because they would only eat it if they did it their way.

"I would try to be very professional like Julia Child, but interesting things often happened to throw me off that course. If I forgot something when I was teaching, or our family dog really did eat up part of my planned event, then I invented on the spot. The children didn't care. Nobody ever knows where 'this' day is going. Maybe it will be magic."

Pauletta Diane Swanson was born on August 8, 1942 in Turlock, California, to Jane E. and Paul M.L. Swanson II. Her father was a dairy farmer and Pauletta learned how to drive on the family tractor. However, she was happy to note, she was not raised to follow in her father's footsteps. Lots of stuff happened in between and then one day she met Herb Cravotto. Herb at that time was a sailor and he worked as a radioman at the Hunters Point Naval Shipyard in San Francisco. They dated for five years and then they married. The couple first lived in Daly City and then they bought a home in Pacifica in 1972.

"What did I like about Herb?" Pauletta asked and answered in 2024. "He was quiet. He was in charge of himself; he was comfortable with himself. And of course, he had a sense of humor. Otherwise he would have run away screaming on the first day."

On February 21, 2022, Pauletta and the couple's two children, Eric and Karen, lost their fearless leader, Herb. On September 20, 2025, surrounded by family and at peace, Pauletta left this world. She is survived by her daughter Karen Cravotto, son Eric Cravotto, his wife Tracy Cravotto, her niece Jennifer Mercado and so many friends. She will be forever loved.

~ *jean bartlett, writer*
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Pauletta's interview-biography took place in October of 2024. It is linked here at Bartlett's Biographies:
https://www.bartlettbiographies.com/files/uqgd/5ea9c3_b3a213218cff49d4b628c355755caeb4.pdf

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Writer Jean Bartlett was recently recognized by the Board of Supervisors, County of San Mateo, for "her writing that connects community and preserves local history." She can be contacted through her website, www.bartlettbiographies.com.

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