

Ruth Baumann – 1936-2011

Ruth Baumann, matriarch of the Swiss family, died Jan. 12. She was 74.

Mrs. Baumann met her husband, Kurt Baumann, when she applied to be a waitress at the restaurant he owned in the middle of South Lake Tahoe. That was 1959, just after she moved to the area from Switzerland. They had been married for 44 years. He died Jan. 10, 2004.



Kurt Baumann with his brother in 1957 started what is still a family restaurant when they bought Schmidt's Bakery.

Mrs. Baumann was the face of the Swiss Chalet restaurant for years. Eventually the couple bought the entire center on Highway 50. The Swiss Chalet is the oldest restaurant in South Lake Tahoe.

They raised their sons, Peter, Ralph and Mark in South Lake Tahoe. The three trade off on who runs the restaurant. A recording at the restaurant on Jan. 13 said the eatery was closed for the day out of respect for Mrs. Baumann, but would resume normal business on Jan. 14.

Mrs. Baumann was a member of Soroptimist International South Lake Tahoe, particularly in the International Goodwill and Understanding committee. The group supported an orphan from Austria who Mrs. Baumann then brought to the United States to meet his benefactors for a short stay.

Services are pending.