ALYCE LAMAR SAVAGE TAYLOR

At A Glance

Birth: June 27, 1920, Reno, Nevada

Death: May 21, 1988, Reno, Nevada

Maiden Name: Alyce LaMar Savage

Race/nationality/ethnic background: White

Married: William Earl Taylor, Jr., 1955, Reno, Nevada.

Primary city and county of residence and work: Reno, Washoe County

Major Fields of work: Educator, Washoe County School District Administrator

Other role identities: Member of prominent Savage family, namesake of elementary school.



Alyce Savage
UNR, *Artemesia*, 1941

Lifetime educator honored for her commitment

Alyce Savage Taylor was born and educated in northern Nevada and served her whole career in the area as a teacher and administrator. She was immortalized by the naming of a Spanish Springs elementary school for her.

Alyce LaMar Savage was born on June 27, 1920, to parents Leonard Charles and Gertrude Batley Savage. Alyce was the first-born, with sister Dorothy G. Savage coming two years later, and brother Leonard J. Savage in 1931. All of the Savage children were lucky to be born into an extremely prominent Nevada family.

Their great-grandfather, Leonard Coates Savage, came to Virginia City in 1859 and bought early mining claims. He sold his Savage Mine before he could fully work the claim, but that name, their family name, became synonymous with one of the highest-producing mines of the Comstock Lode. They also created another Nevada institution in the plumbing business. Together with Alyce's grandfather, Frank Charles Savage, they became Savage and Sons, a Reno contracting company still in business after 130 years.

Alyce grew up in the Reno area and was educated by Washoe County public schools. She attended Mount Rose Elementary School, B. D. Billinghurst Junior High and Reno High School. After graduating high school in 1938, Alyce attended the University of Nevada, Reno. She became involved in the sorority Kappa Alpha Theta and graduated in 1942 with a Bachelor of Science degree. Alyce's interests were varied and unique; she was also part of the campus Aviation Club, where she earned her pilot's license in 1940. Alyce was the only girl to attend the Carmody Air Service summer training program and go through to obtain her license.



Joe Weihe, Francis Nagle, Helen Westall, Instructor Fred Walts, Leland Tucker,
Alyce Savage, Harold Baird.
UNR, Artemesia, 1941

After her graduation, Alyce started what would become a long and impressive career as an educator. In September, Alyce began teaching at the Minden Grammar School. After a year teaching in Minden, she moved back to Reno, teaching fifth grade at Southside School (now called the Southside Studio, owned by the University of Nevada, Reno Innovation Center), and then Veterans Memorial School when it opened in 1949. On top of all this, she was still heavily involved in her college sorority Kappa Alpha Theta as an alumna, even becoming president of the alumni committee and advisory board chairman for the college chapter.

She also became involved with the Twentieth Century Club, a local non-profit women's club, also leading that organization as president, and Delta Kappa Gamma, an honorary education group. Other groups she joined included Emblem Club, the First Baptist Church, the Morrill Hall Committee, and the PEO Sisterhood.

In 1955, Alyce married William Earl Taylor, Jr., a University of California at Berkeley graduate who had served time in the U.S. Air Force and was employed as a buyer for the JCPenney store in Reno. In September 1954, they announced their engagement as a surprise: they put on a luncheon at the Riverside Hotel and Alyce's niece Deborah (daughter of Dorothy) handed each guest a rolled-up scroll with the news. On August 7, 1955, they married in Reno's First Baptist Church. After a honeymoon to the San Francisco Bay area, they settled at 1000 Wright Street, just across the street from her childhood elementary school. This marriage ended in divorce some years later.



Alyce Taylor
Nevada State Journal, 1982

Alyce's career continued at Veterans Memorial school for over a decade, first as a teacher and then as a principal. In 1962, Alyce was given an award by the Veterans' Memorial School PTA for her long tenure as an educator, also gifting her a lifetime PTA membership to the school. In 1966 she moved to a career with the Washoe County School District, as intermediate coordinator for curriculum, the first woman to hold this position. Through that job, she analyzed pedagogy, teaching materials, and community opinions to change curricula for the schools. She visited all 40 Washoe County schools in the district, each about three times a year, engaging with administrators and teachers. She saw all of Washoe County's schools as "good schools," even the underperforming ones, as "even the worst of the county schools have a majority of good teachers." In this role, Alyce also supervised student teachers at UNR's College of Education, for which she was given an award in 1971 for the number of student teachers she'd helped.



On May 21, 1988, Alyce passed away at the age of 67 from cancer. She was still employed with the Washoe County School District at the time of her death, which shows her commitment and passion for education. Alice is buried in the Masonic Memorial Gardens, Reno, Nevada, near her parents and sister.

When the Veterans Memorial Elementary celebrated their 40th anniversary later that year, they dedicated their kindergarten room to Alyce Taylor. An even bigger honor was given to her the next year, in 1989, when the Washoe County School District Trustees voted unanimously to name one of the new elementary schools in the county after her. Alyce Savage Taylor Elementary School opened September 1990 in Spanish Springs and still educates Washoe County children to this day. Through this naming, Washoe County School District has kept her legacy of education and love for students alive.

In total, Alyce Savage Taylor spent 45 years educating, nurturing and fostering children into smart Nevadans, and she herself came from a long line of educated, smart Nevadans. She never had children of her own but used her career to impact on the lives of children for generations.

Researched by Patti Bernard and written by Aubrey Garrard, 2026

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