

Hazel Marie Wheeler

Eulogy

August 25, 2011

On behalf of our family, we'd like to thank everyone for taking the time, to join us in this celebration of the life of Hazel.

Hazel Marie Andrew, was born on January 13, 1937, in Seymour Missouri. She was the youngest of four children. Soon after she was born, the family moved to Seattle, Washington so that their father, Luther Andrew, could work at Boeing.

As our relatives have shared with us, starting at a young age, our mother displayed many goofy antics. One example is that she would sneak under the dining room table, and surprise dinner guest by sticking her tongue out at them. This set the tone for her life, showing her nutty personality which continued for the next 70 years - hence the name "Hazel Nut."

She graduated from Highline High School in 1955, we think... We saw a diploma, honest. And soon afterward, met Vern, through his co-worker Amos Andrew, who happened to be Hazel's brother.

Vern asked our mom to be his girlfriend, but she refused. However, she dated him.... just wouldn't be his "girlfriend", After four months of dating but not being his "girlfriend" , he asked her to marry him, 2 looooong days later , she said..... "Yes."

On November 21, 1958, they got married at Highline Park Church of the Nazarene.

In 1960, Daniel Dean was born, then in 1964, David Allen.

To accommodate the growing family, our mother built a house in Maple Valley, with the "helpful assistance" of her husband Vern, and several of his relatives, who were paid nothing more than gas money for their

contributions. We moved in to that house in 1969.

Our mother spent a lot of time in the garden and doing other household chores with Danny and I. We called this child labor :) Some of our helpful responsibilities were, weeding, rototilling, opening the garage door on demand, changing the channel on the TV like a human remote control, and emptying the dishwasher...kids have it so easy now due to modern technology!!!

Our mom worked for the Bon Marche for about 10 years, first in downtown Seattle, then at the Tukwila distribution center, as the mail lady. They were sorry to see her go, because when she did, they had to replace her with two people. She quit working there to take care of us kids because she felt that we needed a lot of supervision and direction. We think she just didn't like the commute :).

Our dad Vern worked at Boeing for 38 years. It's as if they were both employed, because she got up each morning, made him breakfast and lunch, then sent him on his way. After this, the work really started, because then she had to get my brother and I ready for school and tend to all the other domestic duties. She was committed to being the best mother and wife she could be, whatever it took. She always put others before her self.

Our parents were very adventurous in their younger years and decided to take on riding motorcycles, can you say...hippy phase. and purchased multiple cars. Chevys, Fords, Toyotas - maybe that explains the need to uphold the "Wheel----er" name. We appreciated our parents taking us camping and experiencing the great outdoors along with the other activities that we enjoyed.

Our mom was really good at riding wheelies across the beach - just kidding! But she really loved to ride her Honda 350 on nice sunny days. Vern would take Danny, and my mom would take me, because I was much smaller in those days.

They purchased a Reinell 16 foot boat, which started a shared enjoyment of water skiing. Our mother was always a go-getter - she water-skied

before she could even swim. When she finally took swimming lessons, Danny and I took lessons too. It was always important to her that her children were safe in the water.

One of the other activities that she loved to do in her free time was to go to the Mariner's baseball games. I remember one game we attended on, May 18, 1980. We were walking up the 3rd floor ramp at the Kingdome to our usual nosebleed-section seats, and looked to the south, we saw Mt. St. Helens blowing its top. Quite a memorable moment!!!

When the child laborers left the nest, our mom and dad decided it was wayyyyyyy too much work to have such a large yard, so they moved to their current home near Covington.

Hazel often dreamed of being a grandmother and in 1991 her dream was realized when her first grandchild, Kylie, was born. She just couldn't stop hugging and holding her. Kylie was followed by Zachary in 1994, and Carson in 1998. Hazel was a very proud Grandma!

Tired of the cold and rainy northwest winters, our parents purchased a modest home in Mesa Arizona and began the lifestyle of the snowbird. And it was good. Some years later, they were able to upgrade to a new place, also in Mesa. Many of you have visited and enjoyed this relaxing and warm home.

My mom quickly made many new friends in the Mesa area. She enjoyed going to the Swap Meet, taking walks around the complex, entertaining guests at the house, taking friends to church and playing pool at the clubhouse. She practiced as hard as she could to beat her sons at pool, and occasionally did. She was so proud of her triumphant victories that she told all of Mesa....

Even though our mother had enough money to live comfortably, she did a lot of shopping at Value Village. She relished her outings to her favorite store. We had a joke that she probably bought the same item twice, after taking things back that she didn't want any more, then later she saw such a great deal that she just had to buy it again!

Our mother lived life to the fullest. She went every year to the Albuquerque Balloon Festival with her sister Alice, she went on cruises, para-sailed in Hawaii, Jet Skied, loved the water. Even later in life she would occasionally show her spunk and surprise us by taking a small-airplane ride with David, or go water skiing. She would have jumped out of a perfectly good airplane if we would have suggested it...with a parachute of course.

One highlight that we all enjoyed as a family was a Christmas dinner in Kirkland. We didn't let the fact that the roads were covered with snow stop us. David had purchased a huge Ford 4-by-4 truck, and needed to give us a demonstration. He picked us all up, then headed for our destination. We passed huge quantities of cars in the ditches, going along at a very fast clip. We made it, and our mother kept her screaming to herself.

Two years ago, Vern surprised Hazel with a trip to Hawaii. Unfortunately, this was the beginning of her body starting to fail her, and was unable to go. Her doctor extended her life with a heart surgery and pacemaker which allowed us to enjoy her for two more years. She never once complained about her medical conditions or pains, she just didn't want to have the focus on herself but instead wanted a good time to be had by all.

Hazel was a life-long Christian and loved to attend, actively participate, and socialize in her church. It was important to her to read her Bible regularly, and to pray for her family by name. And God has heard and remembered all of those prayers.

She loved and she is loved. She cared, and we will always care. She will always be smiling from above, we will always be smiling back.

We will always remember her.

Last Friday, on August 19, our mother passed away peacefully in her sleep at her home in Maple Valley. On her lap was her final message to all of us, the book titled, "Goodbye is Not Forever."