



Lila Merchant

November 6, 1934 - February 26, 2014

L. Jeanine Merchant

November 6, 1934 ~ February 26, 2014

She had a genuine "listening ear... so easy to talk to..." Time and time again that description is heard by family members of L. Jeanine Merchant, who went home with the Lord Thursday, February 26, 2014, at which time her absence was immediately and painfully felt. She was born November 6, 1934, in Wenatchee, WA and lived in Entiat, Chelan and Navarre Coulee. Jeanine attended both Entiat and Chelan schools and claimed both as her high school, throughout her years looking forward to attending each class reunion while taking great pleasure in those re-connections!

Jeanine married Jack B. Merchant on May 14, 1951, at the young age of 17 and they settled in Chelan for a short time. When Jack was hired at Rock Island Dam, they moved to East Wenatchee, WA. In 1953, their first child was born and, in 1955, they moved to Sunnyslope, where they remained through the birth of three more children. It was during that time, Jeanine worked as a waitress for Smitty's Pancake House, and in addition, she partnered with close friend, Lou Morehouse, owning/operating the downtown Wenatchee 50 room Wenada Hotel. In 1963, Jack and Jeanine ventured into farming, exchanging their Sunnyslope home for a ten acre cherry/apricot orchard on Wenatchee

Heights, which was fondly named, "The Place." Jeanine was a hard worker, whose employment ranged from packing apples for a local fruit warehouse, seasonal cook at Mission Ridge Ski Lodge, and working at Schroeder's Fuel Company as a gas attendant. Often before and after her 'town job', she slipped on irrigation boots to drag sprinkler pipe in the family's orchard for daily, seasonal water changes whenever Jack's shift at Alcoa prevented him from doing the task. Jeanine knew how to operate the heavy equipment nearly as well as Jack, and with confidence. She was tough. She was strong, yet, kind, caring and lovingly affectionate! Later, she secured a secretarial job with Western Kraft, where she worked for many years. Often you would see her jump into the seat of a fork lift truck to move product if the warehouseman was out. Following her job with Western Kraft, Jeanine worked for Nordang Trucking until retirement.

Mom was the epitome of a mother, wife, and grandmother... walking in fairness, strength, courage, unconditional love, caring, understanding, always free of judgments' and always with an engaged listening ear with spunk that drove her not only through the toughest of times, but in truth and honesty. She was transparent in a most endearing way, evident in the way she lived and addressed important issues. Mom stood boldly for those she loved and was not a person who could be easily intimidated. Whether 6 or 60, anyone could talk to mom. Her heart broke time and time again, but she did not complain when caring for her own parents, step-parents and husband through their illnesses, while caring for them in total devotion to the end, or when facing the heartache of losing her own granddaughter. She pushed through it all. She was an example worthy of proudly following for all who knew her. She made every effort to nurture deep relationships with her grand- and great-grandchildren, who grieve her loss deeply. Of course, we praise God that she no longer suffers pain from illness or heartache from loss. In the later of her life, she faced her challenging days valiantly.

Thank you, Mom, for hanging on to meet your newest grandchildren. Our last Thanksgiving Day together blessed the entire family and the love you shared will always be real and a treasured memory until we see you again. Your life was triumphant while on this earth and we now cherish the thought of you dancing as you did when you were young, in Heaven, where the welcome was nothing short of a most beautiful surprise!

And to the stranger who "Paid-It-Forward" one morning in March at Denny's Restaurant. We thank you for your anonymous gift of paying for mother's breakfast the morning she drove to enjoy a quiet, morning meal alone. Please know, she called each of us to tell the story and as she spoke, her voice trembled as she fought tears. You touched her heart! "Why me?" She said... "but why me?" "Mother," we said, "that person chose to bless you..." She was deeply moved! Thank you!

Jeanine was preceded in death by her husband, Jack Merchant; father and step-mother, Jim and Mable Whitehall; mother and step-father, Gordon and Mary Hays; brother, J.L. Whitehall; and granddaughter, Ashley Barnes.

Her children, Vicki Smith of East Wenatchee, Wendy Barnes (Terry) of East Wenatchee, Jack Merchant of Spokane and Christee Neely (John) of Cashmere, along with her 22 grand- and great-grandchildren invite you to join us on Saturday, March 22, 2014, at 1:00 p.m. to honor mother's memory at New Song Church on Grant Road in East Wenatchee, WA. Following the Service, we will gather for a meal and Celebration of her Life at the Union Hall on Rock Island Road in East Wenatchee, WA, just as she would have wished! Arrangements assisted by Telford's Chapel of the Valley, East Wenatchee.

Jeremiah 29:11 "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not harm you, plans for hope and a future."