



Tillman Leslie Wells

October 12, 1930 - February 9, 2013

Tillman L. Wells

Wenatchee, WA

Physically strong to the end, our father, Tillman Leslie Wells, 82, succumbed to Alzheimer's disease on February 9, 2013. He was born on October 12, 1930, to Virgie (Hastings) and William Wells, who lived on a farm in rural northeast Arkansas. He was the last of six children and is survived by one sister, Evelyn Britts, of Spokane, WA. Dad excelled athletically in high school and went on to play basketball at Beebe Junior College and Arkansas State College after serving in the armed forces. In 1949, at the age of 18, he enlisted in the U.S. Air Force and served three years, eight months and was last stationed in Anchorage, AK. Dad married Dora Lee Lendermon on May 1, 1954, in Beebe, AR, and five years later, with all of their belongings and three children packed into a car, they moved to Wenatchee, WA, where some of the Wells family had migrated earlier. It was in Wenatchee where they raised their four children, adding one more daughter to the family after having left Arkansas, and had successful work lives. Dad picked fruit, worked at the old Keokuk plant, delivered mail, worked at Grange Supply, where he would pick up extra rope for us to use as jump ropes on the sidewalk in front of our home, sold sporting goods at J. C. Penney's, and finally got his dream job: law enforcement. He worked for Chelan County from 1968 to 1977 as a radio

operator, patrolman and detective. He then went to work for the Douglas County Sheriff's Office, retiring as the Undersheriff in 1990. Upon retirement, Dad was asked by a reporter of the local newspaper to describe one of his most memorable cases in law enforcement. He recounted a double homicide of two young women hitchhikers near Chelan in 1975, stating that the unsolved case still haunted him. The fact that he himself had two daughters near the ages of the two hitchhikers made their murders more personal. That story was retold in the first chapter of true crime writer Ann Rule's book, 'Without Pity', published in 2003. However, Dad said that he was never interviewed by Ann Rule and the facts were not entirely accurate. Dad and Mom always enjoyed their work and made long and lasting friendships with co-workers. They were also active in the Wenatchee Valley Baptist Church, accepting Jesus as their Lord and Savior in 1966. Dad and Mom both played softball for many years, making Triangle Park an extension of our own backyard. There were great times playing on the monkey bars behind the concession stand. Later, Dad and Mom turned their sports interests to golf, where Dad once served as President of Three Lakes Golf Club and had an astonishing five holes-in-one! He proudly displayed the trophies and score cards signed by all of the witnesses, until he moved into a memory care facility due to Alzheimer's disease diagnosed in 2008. Dad loved sports, especially baseball, basketball and golf, and was a devoted fan of the Arkansas Razorbacks, Gonzaga Bulldogs, and the WSU Cougars. (Go Cougs!) His love of sports has been a uniting factor in our family and will be a lasting legacy already recognized in his grandchildren. Even though we painfully watched Dad's memory deteriorate over the last four years, we celebrate his 78 years of excellent health, his vibrancy in life and work, and the unwavering and reliable support that he gave to his family. His retirement years were full of golf, gatherings with friends, and traveling throughout the northwest to watch his grandchildren participate in sporting events.

We have been missing our spouse, brother, dad, grandpa, and friend since

Alzheimer's disease robbed him of his memory. After leaving this earth and walking through the gates of Heaven, his memory has finally been restored. His family is proud of the man he was and will always try to emulate his honesty, integrity, work ethic, and love of family and friends. In addition to his sister, Evelyn, Dad is survived by his wife, Dora Wells of Wenatchee; daughter, Joy (Greg) Brown of Wenatchee; daughter, Carol (Kevin) Bredesen of Richland; son, Dan (Tami) of Woodinville; and daughter, Marcia (Ted) Smith of Peshastin. He is also survived by grandchildren, Kyle Peterson, Eric Peterson, Brett Peterson, Shayne Bredesen, James Wells, Stacy Smith, Rae Smith and Tori Smith; and great-granddaughter, Stella Peterson. He was preceded in death by brother, Stacy Wells and sister, Pauline Mooney Seaman, who lived in Wenatchee and by other siblings from Arkansas.

The family would like to thank Dr. Peter Rutherford for his extraordinary compassion, the staff at The Cottage at Highgate, the staff at Bonaventure Memory Care, and the staff at Hospice.

A Memorial gathering for Dad will be held on Friday, February 15, 2013, at 10:00 a.m. in the foyer of the Eastmont Baptist Church, 400 South Kentucky Street, East Wenatchee. In honor of all law enforcement officers, coffee and donuts will be served. The family will be wearing red - Dad's favorite color - and we invite you to wear red clothing as well. If you would care to make a donation in his memory, we would suggest a donation to Hospice at www.hospicencw.org or the Alzheimer's Foundation at www.alzfdn.org. Telford's Chapel of the Valley is assisting with arrangements.

Tribute Wall

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“ *Dora, I wish to extend my sympathy to you and your family. Dora I was at Blossom valley 2 years ago and sat at your table with Jo and Anne, Carol Bonnicksen*

Carol Bonnicksen - February 12, 2013 at 09:55 PM