



Virgil W. Gamache

December 15, 1914 - January 10, 2014

Virgil Walter Gamache

East Wenatchee, WA

Virgil Walter Gamache, 99, of East Wenatchee, WA, passed away peacefully at Blossom Valley Assisted Living Facility on Friday, January 10, 2014. He was born in Moxee City, WA on December 15, 1914, to the late Albert and Louise (Champoux) Gamache. Virgil grew up on a family farm known as Sunshine Ranch, which was established by Albert in Toppenish in the 1920s. They raised alfalfa, wheat, corn, potatoes, apples, grapes and hops. Virgil attended Holy Rosary Grade School, LaRue one room grade school in Toppenish, and graduated from Wapato High School. After a semester at St. Martin's College in Lacey, WA, he returned to work on the family farm. From 1934 to 1936, he drove school bus for Wapato School District for \$8.00 a month. Virgil attended University of Portland and transferred to Seattle University. He then graduated from San Francisco School of Embalming in June of 1939, and served his apprenticeship at Sourwine Funeral Home in Wapato, WA, however, he never worked as a mortician. Due to World War II, his brother, Ambrose, went into the military, and Virgil chose to return to help his father run the farm and Gamache Market, which sold gas, meat, and groceries. In 1942, he enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Corps, where he trained and worked as a Crew Chief on the AT-17 Bobcat and B-25 Bomber for three

years, three months, and three weeks, stationed in Douglas, AZ! While home on furlough, he met Geraldine "Gerri" Sarrazin, who was visiting her sister, Yvette (the wife of Virgil's brother, Ambrose), and decided that she was "the one". After being discharged from Fort Leavenworth, KS, he drove his 1941 Ford to Montreal, Canada and married Gerri on March 2, 1946, at St. Charles Catholic Church and returned home to continue farming. In the mid-40's, Virgil and his brother, Francis, took over operations of Sunshine Ranch, which in later years became the sole ownership of Virgil and is now operated by his sons as Virgil Gamache Farms, Inc. (VGF, Inc.).

Virgil loved farming and woodwork. After retiring to Port Gamble, WA, he landscaped the yard, incorporating his collection of antique farm implements. He built a workshop where he made a long, wooden train, wooden cabinets, headboards, benches and tables, pendulum clocks, flower carts, wagons and wooden toys. Every grandchild received a handmade toy and a pendulum clock. He even made a crochet hook and a pair of crutches just for fun. When his eyesight started to fail, and he could no longer work in the shop, he turned to his next passion, which was genealogy. He has compiled multiple binders of information regarding ancestors, deeds, trusts, and anecdotal stories. Virgil's mind remained sharp to the very end. He could accurately list names and dates as he told his stories. Virgil was a member of Holy Apostles Catholic Church in East Wenatchee and Knights of Columbus. In 1983, he was honored to receive the International Order of the Hop Award for his innovative farming and service to the hop industry.

Virgil is survived by his wife, Gerri; and his children, Kenneth (Chris) Gamache of Yakima, WA, Bernard (Vicki) Gamache of Yakima, WA, Steve (Jocelyn) Gamache of Toppenish, WA, Barbara (Arnie) Bangs of Easton, WA, Paul (Trudy) Gamache of Selah, WA, Ray (Cindy) Gamache of Harrah, WA and Arlene (John) Neal of East Wenatchee, WA. He is also survived by grandchildren, Nicholas, Jacquie, Allison and Andrea, Darren and Andy, Aric

and Ryan, Michael and Katie, Patricia, Awndre and Crystal, and Daniel, Sarah and Amanda; and multiple great-grandchildren. Also surviving are his sister, Theresa (Jerry) Wilton of Springfield, OR; sister-in-law, Elsie (Amos) Gamache of Yakima, WA; and multiple nephews, nieces, cousins and good friends. He was preceded in death by his grandson, Jered Gamache; his brothers, Ambrose, Amos and Francis; and his sisters, Rosalie (Sr. Theresa Louise) and Olive Dietzen.

Virgil's Funeral Mass will be held on Tuesday, January 21, 2014, at 10:30 a.m. at Holy Family Catholic Church, 5315 Tieton Drive, Yakima. Concluding Services and Interment will follow at Terrace Heights Memorial Park at 1:30 p.m. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to LaSalle High School for their Student Center Building Project at 3000 Lightening Way in Union Gap, WA 98903, or Catholic Family and Child Services, 5301 Tieton Drive Suite C, Yakima, WA 98908, <http://ccyakima.org/>. Telford's Chapel of the Valley in East Wenatchee is handling funeral arrangements.

Tribute Wall



“ *Barb, I wanted to let you know how sorry I was to see the death of your dad in the Wenatchee World. I now live in Wenatchee! I have often wondered where you and Kay ended up. I you ever have time, I would love to hear from you! My e-mail address is lafortier@nwi.net. Take care Barb and if you are in contact with Kay, give her my best as well. Lee Annette*

LeeAnnette Fortier - January 15, 2014 at 04:17 PM