



James Jim Ezelle Woods

August 27, 1923 - January 17, 2017

James Ezelle Woods passed away peacefully under the care of hospice at Harmony House in Sedro Woolley, WA on January 17, 2017. Jim was born in Beckville, TX to parents Walter and Alma (Steger) Woods on August 27, 1923. He grew up in the small town of Mt. Enterprise, TX.

My dad was an excellent athlete in high school. Since his town did not have enough players to field a football team, dad often talked about the 60 or more basketball games he played as a point guard for his team. He commented many times how the movie "Hoosiers" reminded him of his hometown. He was an excellent student and was double promoted in elementary school. When he was a senior, he was only sixteen. That year Mt. Enterprise reached the state finals in basketball and won! The school district decided to fail my dad in an English class so he could return and play another year... My mother used to laugh and say, "Only in Texas"!

Jim was awarded an athletic scholarship to Texas A&M, where he attended until 1943 at which time he then joined the Navy. His boot camp training was in Corpus Christie, TX and V-12 training in Fort Worth. From there, he went to Asbury Park in New Jersey and then on to Medical School in Chicago where he received his commission. From Chicago Jim was sent to San Francisco where he caught a troop ship to the Philippines and then went on board an L.C.I. He participated in the Battle of Leyte and was in the Philippines for three

years. He was then assigned to a flotilla that went to Pearl Harbor and from there was assigned to gunboats. They were underway back to the states when the war ended. Jim was then sent to California. He was assigned as a skipper on the L.C.I (#746) and proceeded to Seattle where he ferried sailors to Bremerton. Later, he was placed on Inactive Duty, spent 23 years in the Naval Reserve, and retired as a Lieutenant Commander. While in Seattle after World War II, dad met my mother, Vera Bradley, at an officers' dance. They were married August 24, 1946, in Dallas and enjoyed 63 years together until her death in 2010.

Mom and dad moved to Whatcom County in 1949 and lived next to my grandparents. My dad became the manager of the Copeland Lumber Yard in Lynden and eventually transferred into Bellingham to become a salesman at Columbia Valley Building Materials. He worked there for 32 years. Jim never regretted leaving Texas for the beautiful Northwest. He was an avid fisherman in the lakes of Canada, pheasant hunter in Eastern Washington with his Brittany Spaniels and German Shorthairs, a league bowler for many years, a golfer at Lake Padden, and enthusiastically attended every single sporting event for his grandson who was his pride and joy. My dad never really retained his Texas drawl, but he certainly loved to tell stories and speak in the slow, native manner of his childhood.

Jim was preceded in death by his parents; wife, Vera; brother, JW of Houston, TX; and sister, Mozelle of Henderson, TX.

He is survived by his daughter, Sandy (Fred), grandson, Scott (Erin), and great grandson, Quentin. Also surviving him is a brother, Oris of Longview, TX, and several nieces and their families from Texas – Renee, Stacy, Amy, and April Ann.

A special thanks to Pam and Cole Verner, owner of Harmony House, and

Kate, Heather, and Terri who provided such excellent care for him at the facility. Also a thank you to the hospice team for helping in his final days.

A graveside service with military honors will be held on Saturday, May 20th at 1:00pm at Moles Greenacres (5700 NW Dr, Ferndale).