



Juanita Joyce Morelli

December 27, 1930 - February 26, 2018

Our beloved mother, Juanita J. Morelli, age 87, died on Monday, February 26, 2018 in the Special Care Center at Lynden Manor. We began our long goodbye four years ago when Juanita was diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease. She subsequently succumbed to kidney failure. Juanita traversed the difficult last years with dignity and grace.

Juanita was born December 27, 1930 in Sumas, Washington, the second of four children, to Sylvester and Ethel (Stump) Kentch. Other than brief stints in Seattle and Eastern Washington, Juanita lived her entire life in Whatcom County, which she considered the best place in the world to reside. Though born in Whatcom county, Juanita always said she was a "city girl". She graduated from Bellingham High School. After graduating she walked to her job at Brown Beauty and Barber Supply. With her savings, she independently bought and, with the help of her father, renovated two houses. She was quite surprised to be labeled a "spinster" by her lending bank at age 21.

Juanita met Tom Morelli at a dance and they married a couple of years later. Juanita and Tom raised their children, six girls and one boy, in Whatcom County, where Juanita learned to become a "farm girl". In addition to milking cows and churning butter, she played the piano, gardened, and sewed a seemingly endless array of prom dresses for her daughters. She designed and oversaw construction of a new family home. She finished the basement,

including the carpentry, herself. Though unsubstantiated, she claimed to once have ridden a horse.

Years later, Juanita took a job with Safeway grocery where she worked for almost 25 years. Several years after her divorce, Juanita sold the farm and bought a house in Bellingham. After retirement she savored spending time with family and close friends and described these years as some of her happiest. She delighted in helping her children with countless home improvement projects and was a willing babysitter for many grandchildren. She liked to read and watch movies. She enjoyed numerous trips to see her daughter and family who live in Texas. In addition to her devotion to family, Juanita will be remembered for her love of laughter and her beautiful smile.

Left to honor Juanita and remember her love are Juanita's seven children, Kathy (Dan) Slesnick, Diana (Greg) Zender, Ken Morelli, Julie Sturgeon, Dina Morelli, Marna (Steve) Morelli and Toni (Roger) VanWeerdhuizen; twelve grandchildren, Nichole Braun, Erin (Shane) Morelli-Mettile, Josh (Rebecca) Zender, Ashley (Taylor) Lindsey, Kyle Bergh, Tyson Slesnick, Dustin Rathjen, Nolan Slesnick, Lara Slesnick, Cory Bergh, Gerrit VanWeerdhuizen and Travis VanWeerdhuizen; five great-grandchildren; a brother, Wes (Louise) Kentch; and nieces and nephews. Juanita was preceded in death by her parents, infant brother Charles and sister, Arlene.

The Morelli family would like to extend our gratitude to the staff at the Lynden Manor, specifically those in the Special Care Center for their attentiveness and loving care. Special thanks to companion care provider, April Cruikshank-Durkee, whose exceptional compassion and devoted care provided immense comfort to Juanita over the past several years. Dear friend and neighbor, Kerin Mana, provided tremendous support during transition from home to Lynden Manor.

An informal Celebration of Life ceremony will be held Saturday, Mar 31st at 1PM at Moles Farewell Tributes – Greenacres, 5700 Northwest Drive, Ferndale, WA 98248. Juanita would have wanted you to wear bright colors and bring a smile.

Please share memories at wordpress-271002-1416095.cloudwaysapps.com

Tribute Wall



“ *WHAT A LOVELY LADY SHE WAS. SO KIND AND SWEET.
BLESSINGS TO THE FAMILY.* ”

Jan Pinkstaff - February 26, 2018 at 12:00 AM