



Janice Marie Fanning

June 24, 1935 - June 11, 2024

Janice Marie (Draper) Fanning of Cheney, WA passed peacefully into Heaven on June 11, 2024, with her children by her side. During her last day, she had 22 family members share time with her loading her with love and the sweetest of good-byes. Jan kept her wit and humor throughout the day. Son, John, baptized Mom while surrounded by family. This was her wish.

Jan was born June 24, 1935, in Wilbur, WA to Ward and Gladys Draper. She comes from a pioneering family south of town and grew up on the farm near Wheatridge. She joined sister Marilyn and later welcomed little sister Wardine. She loved to play outside and tried to avoid all the household chores that she could. During her childhood, she was a 4-H member, excelled in piano, was a WHS cheerleader, and kept many mementos from these years. She was a proud Wilbur Redskin, class of '53. We all loved to hear her stories of growing up which she always told in a way to get us laughing.

Mom attended WSC (WSU) for 3 years when she was, in her words, successful in obtaining her M.R.S. degree. She married Richard Fanning, Dick, August 19, 1956. She was a music major, a yell leader, and was the Homecoming Queen of '55. There are so many other titles that she won on popularity votes during her time in Pullman. Mom has always had the gift of drawing people to her sparkling personality and has always been well-liked by all.

After living in Texas and New Jersey on army bases from 1956 to 1958, Jan and Dick moved to Port Townsend, WA for his position at the Fort Worden Diagnostic and Treatment Center. She quickly made what was to become lifelong friends that are more like family. Even though the cloudy and rainy days were not Mom's favorites, she shined her loving, kind, and very funny light all over town. She was on a tennis team, acted in Key City Players, organized a Miss Pt. Townsend contest for the Rhody Festival, helped build the Pt. Townsend floats for several years, had morning coffee with the other young mothers, organized many dances and functions that often included costumes, hosted a plethora of neighborhood kids at one of the most fun houses to go to, cut their hair, and taught piano for 6 years.

In 1959 Jan and Dick welcomed daughter LeAnn and in 1961 son John. She taught both of us how to sew clothing for our stuffed animals and dolls. She would ignore laundry and dishes just to sit with us and sing to record albums of the 1960s. She gave us the best birthday parties in town. Mom also made costumes for us each Halloween and for the Kiddie parades. She sewed clothing for herself and us that I still hear about from those early-day friends, they were so fashionable and admired. Most of our holidays and many weekends found our family camping around the Puget Sound or at the cabin at Diamond Lake, WA. Come to find out later, Mom didn't get to enjoy the vacations because she was 'stuck cooking and doing dishes'. Many camping trips were with other Fort Worden families, and we do recall her having loads of fun. The time away from home she liked the best was the annual Garred Family Reunion when she'd get to spend time with her mother's side of the family. This reunion continues today, and she will be sorely missed this year.

In 1971 the family moved to Cheney, WA as Dick's career took him to the area. Jan was so happy to be back to her open sky, rolling wheat fields, sunshine, and closer to her family. She obtained her first job, outside of

teaching piano and running a household, for the City Attorney as the secretary. She always claimed she got the job because she wore a short skirt! We always told her that it was her personality and positive attitude. She excelled in this position for six years before getting on at EWU. She landed as the secretary for the Art Dept. and loved her job, mainly the faculty and students. She received many a gift from the graduating students and filled her home with beautiful original art. Mom retired from EWU in 1998. Jan and Dick divorced in 1978 but were happy to be at the same family functions and got along well.

Jan was a member of Beta Sigma Phi, a philanthropic organization, for nearly 50 years. She was on bowling teams over the years; played Bingo in Cheney and in Spokane; and enjoyed her years playing Bunco, Bridge, and Pinochle. One thing that the entire extended family looked forward to at celebrations was Mom writing a personal song and singing it, dressed in costume, and playing her kazoo. She stated her interests to be "Grandchildren, piano, needlework, travel, and friends". And travel she did! She bought a van and traveled solo for years, never taking a freeway because she liked the landscape, small towns, finding the best burger, and believed in the journey more than the destination. She traveled to New York City, Nevada, Utah, and many countries in Europe. Her favorite place was Lincoln City, OR. She spent weeks in June and in the Fall there watching the waves, the birds, the sunsets, and going to breakfast at 'her' Otis Cafe. She loved sharing just a little of her Lincoln City time with her sister Wardine (& Marvin), her friend Roberta, and on occasion her kids and grandkids. For many years she joined her closest Pt. Townsend lady friends, Marilyn, Neva, and Doreen, on the coast somewhere just enjoying the company of each other. The stories and memories they must have shared, not just about them but their other lifelong best friends, Pete, Ed & Eileen, Marie & Newman, and so many others.

Janice is preceded in death by both of her parents and too many friends and family to mention. She is survived by her sisters Marilyn Sherwood and Wardine Riechmann. She leaves behind daughter LeAnn Fanning Knoles and grandkids Elizabeth Shepard, Spencer (Janessa) Knoles, and Clayton (Jacynth) Knoles; and son John (Christy) Fanning and grandkids Julie (Gregg) Smith, Michael (Tricia) Fanning, Michelle Fanning, Marie Fanning, and Jacob Fanning. Missing their great-grandma are Ashton, Layla, Eugene, Quinn, Ella, Dakota, Gunner, Olivia, Jack, Luke, Miles, and Nevaeh.

A Graveside service is being held at the Wilbur Cemetery on Tuesday, June 18th at 2:00 pm with a reception following at the Community Center.

A Celebration gathering will be in Cheney, WA later this summer. Mom wouldn't want flowers or donations made. She would want everyone to tell their family that they love them and would want friends and family to make someone smile or laugh.

Cemetery Details

Wilbur Cemetery

14 NW Division St.
Wilbur, WA 99185

Previous Events

Graveside Service

JUN 18. 2:00 PM (PT)

Wilbur Cemetery
14 NW Division St.
Wilbur, WA 99185

Tribute Wall

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“ 2 files added to the album Janice



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