



Jean Marilyn Smallwood

June 25, 1930 - February 11, 2025

Jean Marie (Moothart) Smallwood went to her heavenly reward on February 11, 2025 after a long well-lived life and a short battle with dementia. Jean was born June 25, 1930 in Wenatchee to Elvin and Bessie (Barnhart) Moothart. In her young life her family lived in Cashmere and Dryden. Her father worked in the orchards up and down the Cashmere Valley until they had enough saved up to purchase their own orchard in Tonasket, WA. Moving there in 1946 Mom started school at Tonasket High School graduating in 1948. Our father, Garnel Smallwood, was working for Elvin and Bessie on their orchard and courted Mom and was often the case back then, they married shortly after she graduated. They were married at the Ellisforde Church of the Brethren but it was a bit difficult getting there since the highway was covered with water from the 1948 flooding of the Okanogan River. Mom had to climb into a boat and was rowed until they could reach the car, parked along the road north of her parent's home.

Jean and Garnel lived in Tonasket for a short time, then lived in McKinleyville, CA with Garnel's family, James and Luella Smallwood. Their first son Tom was born there 11 months later. At Mom's insistence they moved back to Washington living in Tonasket where Mike was born, and finally settling in Okanogan. Mom was busy raising Tom and Mike while Dad worked for the local Creamery delivering milk. Dad, like his father-in-law Elvin had a dream of owning his own orchard and in 1956 they were able to purchase their first

orchard just around the time Janice was born. For many years Mom held down the fort while Dad worked and farmed. In time they added another orchard south of Okanogan and at that point Dad went into full-time farming. They truly had a partnership with Mom taking care of all the bookkeeping, raising the children, and keeping a spotless house, even if it was four picker cabins pushed together.

Money was always tight as full-time farmers with land payments, but they made it work. Mom did work out of the home at the warehouse packing apples in the fall, saving her money to always give us a wonderful Christmas.

Mom and Dad were very involved in the First Baptist Church in Okanogan, rarely missing a monthly business meeting or Sunday services. Afterwards there was always a pot roast in the oven waiting for us for the noon meal. Mom had many different jobs in the church over the years and always did them to the best of her abilities.

In 1966 Mom's dream of a larger home was finally realized when they remodeled a home Dad had moved to the orchard on Barnholt Loop. She poured lots of hard work into the house throughout the summer along with Dad. As always, her new home was pristine, and the yard continued growing as she mowed out a little farther each time until she had included a complete row of the cherry orchard in the yard. Mom had always canned fruit and each year it seemed the quarts multiplied. We never did without peaches, pears, apricots, cherries, and applesauce at every meal. Apple pie was also another specialty and she liked to fill the freezer with them as well.

When the folks opened up their fruit stand south of Okanogan in 1977 her canning went into overdrive. If fruit was bruised, she'd salvage the good parts and work canning in the back room in between customers. Mom had customers place orders for her canned delights for years and many quarts of

peaches or pears made their way to her grandchildren's stomachs. She continued to can until her mid-80s when her back and feet made it difficult for her to remain standing for the long hours required to can up to 2000 quarts in each summer. One could never fault her for not being a hard worker. Somehow, she still managed to spoil grandchildren, mow the yard, and make sure dust never settled in the house. When retirement came around Mom and Dad moved into a home close to Janice where she continued spoiling her grandchildren. After Dad's passing in 2006 she began to slow down some, but still kept her yard mowed, the house immaculate, and her flowers weeded. She was not one to vacation, but we took her to Mexico one Christmas and she came home with the best tan of all of us! After she made the decision to move to assisted living, she lived at Apple Springs for many years, making the move to Pasco and Northcare Assisted Living in 2023 to be closer to Janice.

Jean was preceded in death by her parents Elvin and Bessie Moothart, husband Garnel, and son Tom. She is survived by brother Jack in Texas, Janice (Terry) of West Richland, Mike (Joji) of Peshastin, nine grandchildren, and 16 great grandchildren. Memorials may be given in her name to the First Baptist Church in Okanogan or Chaplaincy Hospice, 1480 Fowler Street, Kennewick, WA 99352.

The family would like to express their gratitude to the staff of Northcare Assisted Living for the wonderful care and love they showed Mom over the past two years, as well as Chaplaincy Hospice. A memorial service will be held in the spring.

Tribute Wall

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“ 2 files added to the tribute wall



River Valley Funeral - February 17, 2025 at 05:50 PM