

MOTHER ARMELLA FAGERNESS



My mother was born on October 21st, 1923 in Adrian, Minnesota. She was the daughter of Bernard and Mollie Mormann. She had three brothers, Norbert, Alvin and Gregor. The family had a farm located northeast of Adrian. The farm had a creek flowing through a large valley that made much of the 320 acres suitable only for grazing. For years they had to remove rocks, which seemed to grow from the ground. They were spared having to remove trees, as most of the farm was treeless.

My mother had friends on the neighboring farms that became life long friends. On the next farm to the North was Harry Osborne. He was 10 years older than Mom. Later in life he would wire Grandma Fagerness's home for electricity. Just east of his farm was Teresa Lutterman. She was a year older than Mom. She is Joanne's mother. Their friendship resulted in me meeting Joanne in 1994 and our marriage in 1996.



Mom received 9 years of school from St. Adrian Catholic School in Adrian.

First Communion in 1931. From the left: Norbert, Mom, and Alvin.



On June 6th, 1941 she went to a local dance. She was asked by her friends to sing the song "Oh Johnny". When she sang, she was noticed by my Dad, Lee Fagerness. He told me he immediately fell in love with this beautiful girl who sang so romantically. They began dating. On February 14th, 1942 they were engaged. However, World War II interrupted their marriage plans. Dad was called into the Navy. They went ahead with their plans to marry and on D-day, June 6, 1944 they were married in St. Adrian church. Dad was then stationed in Norfolk, Virginia. Mom got a job there working as clerk in Ben Franklin. It was the only time Mom worked outside the home. They wanted to save up for a house when they got back to Rushmore.

Mom and Dad in 1944.

While in Norfolk they had the first of 12 children, Mary. After the war Mom and Dad purchased the Cowin Long home in Rushmore for \$2000 cash. They had saved up the money from the service and Mom working. The house did not have insulation or very much electric wiring. They had both added. In 1953 plumbing was also added when Rushmore got running water. They moved to the house in March of 1946.



Mom's stepladder from the left: Mary, Craig, Loren, Gerald, Therese, Rosemary, Janet, Tom and Joan. (1960)

Mom and Dad were blessed with 12 children, 7 girls and 5 boys. They are Mary, Craig, Loren, Gerald, Therese, Rosemary, Janet, Tom, Joan, Richard, Sharon, and Celeste. Mom loved the expression, "Cheaper by the dozen". Mom just loved telling people about her dozen.

For 9 years Mom drove us to St. Adrian Catholic School in Adrian. After that we all transferred to public school. Mom always emphasized how important education was. It was a strong influence that led ten of the twelve to graduate from college.



An example of the flowers Mom could grow. Her plants always had huge and numerous blossoms.

In 1993 Dad died from leukemia. After 49 years of marriage and a boundless unselfish love, they parted. Mom moved to Worthington to an apartment. She kept busy growing flowers and playing cards. Her flowers were featured in the local newspaper, the Worthington Globe. Her flowers placed first many times at the county fair. She loved playing cards. Her card playing even resulted in a perfect bridge hand of each player getting dealt one of the four suits. But, as a Mom, she achieved real perfection. She has 12 kids who know the real love and dedication of a Mother. To them she is a perfect "Mom".

Our dear Mother was diagnosed on May 30, 2012 with Lymphoma. She was given two months to live. The doctors wrote in her medical report describing her “This very pleasant lady”. She died on July 30, 2012. Her illness did not show until 5 days before she died. She was able to visit friends and relatives just as if she wasn’t ill for 7 weeks. She felt so grateful to be able to say goodbye to everyone.

Her obituary: http://www.dglobe.com/event/obituary/id/58897/publisher_ID/24/

Her funeral pamphlet:

<http://www.craigfagerness.com/familycraigslide/craigsmomfuneralpamphlet.pdf>

The Eulogy from Father Jim Callahan:

<http://www.craigfagerness.com/familycraigslide/Xeulogy.pdf>

The 12 children of Armella Fagerness at the funeral:

