



Betty Downing

November 16, 1926 - November 15, 2011

Betty Lou Downing was born on Nov. 16, 1926, in Roseburg to Maurice and Ruth Vogelpohl.

She graduated from Sutherlin High School, and attended the University of Oregon before transferring to Oregon State University, where she earned her Bachelor of Science degree in home economics.

While at OSU, Betty Lou met and fell in love with Dale Downing. Betty Lou and Dale married on Aug. 29, 1948, in Sutherlin. The two were married for 57 years, until Dale passed away in 2006.

Betty Lou and Dale's marriage was a fruitful one, their brood ever expanding as they moved to different Air Force bases where Dale was posted around the country and world. Steve was born in 1949 in Oregon; Pat in 1951 in Oklahoma; Mike in 1953 in Washington; Mark in 1954 in Okinawa; and Marilee in 1958 in Washington.

During their Air Force years, Betty Lou and Dale traveled extensively, a lifestyle that continued throughout the rest of their lives. During their long and happy marriage, they lived in Oregon, Washington, Okinawa, Alabama, the Philippines, Florida, New York and Colorado. The two traveled through or visited nearly all 50 states. They also vacationed in Bermuda, Thailand, Turkey, India, Pakistan, Mexico, England, Ireland, Greece and China.

When Dale was stationed to Southeast Asia to fly in Vietnam in the 1960s, Betty Lou and the children moved to Oregon for the year. Betty Lou took this opportunity to enroll again at Oregon State to begin work on her master's

degree in counseling. She found that she very much enjoyed her return to the Corvallis community.

After Dale's military career, Betty Lou and Dale retired to a beautiful rural home on the outskirts of Corvallis in 1973. During the 33 years at this home on Mountain View Drive, it became the destination point for many family visits and vacations.

With Betty Lou and Dale's children living all across the state or country, it was a special time indeed when all of the children and grandchildren were able to get together in Corvallis. Betty Lou cherished her children and grandkids, and liked nothing better than hosting a Thanksgiving or Christmas meal at the Mountain View home for friends and family.

It was during this time, beginning in the 1970s, with the frequent military postings behind them and the children gone to attend college or begin work, that Betty restarted her career in consumer credit counseling.

Through the years at her job in Albany, Betty Lou helped hundreds of clients manage their finances, repair their damaged credit, and climb out from under mountains of debt to begin to gain control of their lives. Her lessons of saving, planning and spending wisely were also instructive to her own children, who learned much from seeing how she expertly managed her own financial affairs.

Betty Lou was an active member of First Presbyterian Church in Corvallis, serving for many years in the Presbyterian Women and volunteering on countless projects and committees. Betty Lou was personally involved for years in sponsoring and supporting many of the immigrants from Asia who had moved to the Corvallis area.

She also generously gave of her time and talents to the Assistance League of Corvallis, the Benton County Historical Museum in Philomath, and other charitable organizations.

In the later years of her life, she and Dale made frequent trips to visit their children and grandchildren, as they also moved about the country to Virginia, California, Florida, North Carolina, Texas, Ohio, North Dakota, Indiana and

South Dakota.

Betty Lou will be remembered as a kind and godly woman, a loving and devoted wife, a caring and supportive mother, and a sweet and generous grandmother to her 13 grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. During the last years of her life, she slipped further and further into the fog of Alzheimer's disease. But through it all, her peaceful and gentle spirit remained.

Betty Lou died quietly in her sleep early on Monday morning, one day before her 85th birthday.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be sent to the Alzheimer's Association through alz.org.

A memorial service is set for 3 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 19, at Bellfountain Community Church, 25387 Dawson Road, Monroe. Private inurnment will take place in Willamette National Cemetery.