



JoAnn Neer Hathaway

April 23, 1931 - April 28, 2015

April 23, 1931 – April 28, 2015

JoAnn Patricia (Neer) Hathaway was the second of three children born to Thomas Earl and Claribel (Decker) Neer, and a fourth-generation Benton County resident. Shortly before her birth, the family relocated to the Beaver Creek area south of Corvallis near Claribel's extended family, where they lived on a farm.

Together with her sister Betty and older brother Merle, JoAnn roamed their 400 scrub acres, climbing trees, picking berries and cherries, swimming in the creek, and helping out on the farm. She attended the one-room Beaver Creek School, where she completed eight grades in seven years. JoAnn's family moved into town during her years at Corvallis High School, where she graduated in 1948.

She met Roy Hathaway during Future Farmers of America and Home Economics Club get-togethers. They were married June 18, 1950, after Roy graduated from Oregon State College. JoAnn went one term to OSC, but enjoyed her job as a legal secretary and chose to continue at that until she had children.

JoAnn and Roy made their home on Kiger Island near Corvallis, where they

raised four children and farmed up to 500 acres over the next 64 years. They produced many row crops, hazelnuts, berries, wheat, alfalfa, beets and grass seed. Over the years, they added another 500 acres of timberland. They worked as partners to run the farm. JoAnn did the bookwork, managed the household and was Roy's best truck driver.

JoAnn joined Roy in his hobbies of hunting and fishing, and this became a large part of their family lives. JoAnn was an excellent shot and successful hunter. For 1976, she was the only woman to be awarded the Boone and Crocket Trophy for her antelope.

Her love of reading continued throughout her life. JoAnn was an avid reader of anything except fiction. She loved to learn about things, especially history and places of interest. She loved to travel, and had visited all 50 states and many countries.

She also really enjoyed handwork and was proficient at most forms of embroidery and hardanger. She was an excellent seamstress and taught her daughters many of the same skills. She was a leader for both 4-H and Girl Scouts as her girls grew up.

JoAnn served the Farm Bureau for more than 60 years. She was elected to multiple terms as county president and was chairperson of the bureau's Women's Advisory Council. She was elected to the Benton County board for more than 30 years and she served on the Oregon Board of Directors for many years. She received the Gold Star Award, a national award for top women in Farm Bureau.

Together JoAnn and Roy received numerous awards from the Farm Bureau: Outstanding Farm Family (1990); the Oregon President's Award in 1969, 1983 and 1996; and induction into the Oregon Farm Bureau Hall of Fame in 2004.

A highlight of JoAnn's service to the Farm Bureau was a 1983 trip where she met then-President Reagan.

JoAnn believed that farm women had a special opportunity to affect change. She had the ability to understand the workings of the political system and how it affected the family farm.

JoAnn devoted much of her energy to this cause. She was instrumental in organizing and getting the Summer Ag Institute course started at Oregon State University. In 2005, JoAnn received the Diamond Pioneer Award from the OSU College of Agriculture, and was named one of the 100 Smartest Women in Agriculture in the nation.

JoAnn was selected by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to travel to Ukraine, where she trained women how to better manage their farms. She was appointed by Reagan to the U.S. Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service Committee, for which she served in Oregon and Washington, D.C. She also worked on numerous political campaigns and was a delegate to the Republican State Central Committee.

In their latter years, JoAnn and Roy enjoyed traveling the United States and abroad, and wintering in the Salton Sea area of Southern California. JoAnn was very active in their craft club and enjoyed the many friends they made at the Fountain of Youth Spa.

She was an active member of First Baptist Church of Corvallis, which she attended from the age of 5. She served in many roles, from Sunday school teacher to deaconess. In later years, she was especially active on the Missions Committee, which allowed her to keep in contact with and help support many missionaries throughout the world. She was a committed

Christian who now is in heaven with her savior.

She is survived by her husband, Roy Clark Hathaway; sister Betty Craig of Salem; son Ron (Linda) Hathaway of Corvallis; daughters Joyce (Rick) Reed of Springfield, Connie (Darrell) May of Sweet Home and Dianne (David) Egbert of Eugene; grandchildren Michelle Reed, Mark Reed, Scott May, Kenny May, Brent Hathaway, Michael Hathaway, Laura Sinkbeil, Kaitlyn Tepe, Brad Egbert and Jordan Egbert; and 10 great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her parents, and brother Merle Neer.

JoAnn's life will be remembered and celebrated at a memorial service at 2 p.m. on May 19 at First Baptist Church of Corvallis.