

Come, Little Leaves

~ by George Cooper ~

*“Come, little leaves,“ said the wind one day,
“Come o’er the meadows with me and play;
Put on your dresses of red and gold,
For summer is gone and the days grow cold.”
Soon as the leaves heard the wind’s loud call,
Down they came fluttering, one and all;
Over the brown fields they danced and flew,
Singing the glad little songs they knew.
“Cricket, good-by, we’ve been friends so long,
Little brook, sing us your farewell song;
Say you are sorry to see us go;
Ah, you will miss us, right well we know.
“ Dear little lambs in your fleecy fold,
Mother will keep you from harm and cold;
Fondly we watched you in vale and glade,
Say, will you dream of our loving shade?“
Dancing and whirling, the little leaves went,
Winter had called them, and they were content;
Soon, fast asleep in their earthy beds,
The snow laid a coverlid over their heads.*



Celebrating the Life of



Betty Schaffer

May 20, 1927 ~ August 18, 2019



Mrs. Betty Elaine (Briggs) Schafer,

a real-life force of nature, passed away peacefully in her home, entirely on her own terms, on August 18, 2019. She was 92.

Betty was born on May 20, 1927, to Rolland and Opal (Corey) Briggs, in Mandan, ND. She was the 2nd oldest, and the eldest girl, of 12 children, who grew up together in “paradise,” in a modest little house on the prairie, nestled on the banks of the Sheyenne River. As a child, Betty loved to run through the woods and over the plains with her siblings and cousins, having grand adventures in nature. She was close to her grandparents, greatly admired the fortitude of her hard-working parents and had a special place in her huge and protective heart for all her little brothers. Betty loved the outdoors and

gardening. She loved sewing and crafting. She loved education and while she didn't have much access to it, she explored the wide world in her imagination as she was an avid reader, devouring the written word at every opportunity. Betty attended Ft. Totten Indian School, as part of the first class to integrate the institution, in 1944. As such, she began to build her future believing in the plight of the Native American people, the importance of independence for women and the ideology of equity for all. She was truly ahead of her time. Leaving home, Betty found her way to Fargo, ND, where she received a license in cosmetology and worked as a hairdresser, back in the days of barbaric instruments of metal and fire. She always took great pride in her appearance and created her own clothing fashions, looking perfectly coiffed, all throughout her life. In the years to come, Betty would find herself boarding and working in Cavalier, ND, in the kinship of one Mrs. Schafer. It was through her fated friend that she met the love of her life, Mr. Robert Roy Schafer. He was a tall, demure and dapper gentleman, who walked for miles in the pouring rain to her door one night and took a knee in the parlor. She swore up and down that while he knelt there he was entirely dry, in spite of the weather. He was her whole world from that moment on. They were married on November 27, 1946 and would stay that way, always smoochin' and snugglin', for 64 years, until Bob died in 2011. As Mr. and Mrs. Schafer started their family, they welcomed two daughters, Linda and Lana, and a son, Jake. They eventually moved to Mandan, ND, where they planted their permanent roots. Bob worked for the Bureau of Reclamation while Betty kept their family and home with love, care and an ever iron fist. Together they loved camping, fishing and exploring. They enjoyed traveling and adventuring and Betty made sure everyone in her sphere remained active and thriving. Her hearth and heart extended far beyond her husband and three children to her siblings, nieces, nephews, neighbors and friends, as she nurtured everyone who needed her, running a tight and tidy ship with an enormous and

loyal crew. Betty had a very green thumb, and was able to grow a mighty oak from half an acorn haphazardly tossed into a bucket of water. She was a veritable Snow White of woodland creatures, and nursed countless critters, from birds to squirrels, raccoons, and rabbits, throughout the years. She was a baby whisperer and could calm any crying child, rocking them in a loving lap that would lull any little one to sleep. She loved animals, baking, birds, politics and faith. She loved artistry, and was very creative, crafting colorful ceramics, porcelains, cross-stich and crochet. She loved Halloween and sported many seriously scary and cool costumes over the seasons. She loved to be social, and belonged to several women's clubs, enjoying the company and laughter of her like-minded friends. She adored jewelry, and was proud of how pleased Bob was to adorn her in finery, hiding trinkets for her on the Christmas tree each year. She had an inherent inner rhythm and could dance like a dervish, beautifully enhanced by her iconic hum. She enjoyed playing cards, playing music, playing and talking with her 8 grandchildren and 6 great-grandchildren, decorating her home for various holidays and even after she lost much of her vision in her later years, she listened to audio books every day, never losing her affinity for reading. Betty Elaine Schafer was the definition of strength and determination. The perfect picture of a matriarch. She not only survived, she became. She was bold, often brash, always beautiful, sincere and so very smart. She was as tough as she was gentle and her home was the gathering place for a family who adored and admired her beyond their ability to adequately demonstrate it. She wasn't known for being sappy or sentimental, yet she often mused about how far back should could journey in her memory, to a simple and special time when a dozen dirty little barefooted children could run free and far in the wild blue yonder. She lived a full, fierce, vibrant, voracious, happy, hearty and healthy nine decades and now, in her death, she can kick off her shoes and run wild and free once more. She was larger than life, and certainly too large for this one. She was inspirational and loved, and will be so incredibly missed.

Betty was preceded in death by her parents, Rolland and Opal; her husband, Bob; her sisters, Evelyn Johnson and Leona Golde; her brothers, Jack and Rolland Briggs; her beloved daughter, Lana Bernhardt; and her corgi, Belle and lovebird, Peachy. She is survived by her children, Linda & Tim Massey and Jake & Jane Schafer; her grandchildren, Beau & Tammy Massey, Toni & Greg Wheeler, Amber Rae Bernhardt & Tom Chrz, Cole & Courtney Bernhardt, Jacob Schafer, Dylan & Hannah Hilfer-Schafer, Cale & Linsey Schafer, and Wyatt Schafer; her great grandchildren, Kayla Massey & David Mercado, Scout & Pip Wheeler, Nikki & Levon Chrz, and Silas Bernhardt; her siblings, Lawrence (Pat,) Charles (Mary), Arnold (Sharon) Briggs, Coral Beaudoin, Lorraine Skoglund, Barbara Schmitke, and Shari Briggs; and a wealth of nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends who held her in as high esteem as the rest of us. It is hard to believe Betty is really gone, and losing her has been a humbling experience. But as Betty would want, wipe your eyes, lift your chins and raise a tall glass of Johnny Briggs Irish Red in her honor. Cheers to many years of great memories of someone so mighty.