



## Hazel "Merlene" Williams

August 31, 1929 - July 3, 2015

Hazel Merlene Cooper Williams died Friday, July 3, 2015 after an extended illness. She was born August 31, 1929 to Lydia and J. Houston Cooper in Melbourne, Arkansas. Her early education was in Melbourne and Marked Tree. The family returned to Melbourne where she attended high school. She enjoyed playing basketball on the high school team, and it was there she met Cleo Williams, whom she later married in 1946. After high school, she worked at the soda fountain at the Baptist Hospital. When Cleo returned from the Navy, they moved to Wenatchee to live. Merlene, as she preferred to be called, was very active in church. She was a member of the Wenatchee Valley Baptist Church for many years and was an active worker in the church, teaching Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, GA's, WMU, and served on many church committees. She was very fond of working in the kitchen, as she loved to cook. She took great pride in putting together potlucks and dinners for the church membership. Her coconut crème pie was a favorite! The Baptist Church grew, and mom and dad decided to be charter members of a new branch in East Wenatchee, called Eastmont Baptist Church. Mom helped the church to grow, and was very involved when they chose the first building site and helped to provide input on the design and look of the new building. Mom worked on and off as a waitress for several years at Mackenzie's Café, which was owned by her sister, Lucy. She enjoyed working with her sister and her brother Arlis. She also worked for a short time at Safeway and Tony's Market in East Wenatchee.

In 1976, mom and dad purchased an orchard in East Wenatchee and lived there several years, growing red and golden delicious apples, and selling the property in 1986. Dad retired in 1989, and they had purchased another home in East Wenatchee that became the place to gather for holidays and summer fun. The pool was open to everyone, including baseball teams and friends of the grandkids. Mom and dad were always ready for company and eager to fire up the grill!

They later moved to Wenatchee, where they resided for 22 years. Mom really enjoyed watching her grandkids and great-grandkids and planning holiday dinners and events. She loved gardening, fashion, and keeping a gorgeous home, and was always ready to go shopping whenever she had the chance. Merlene was very proud of the home and rose gardens her and Cleo tended, but her greatest joy was her family.

Mom and dad enjoyed traveling and were frequent visitors to Branson, MO. Mom really enjoyed watching the music shows and visiting with family from "back home."

Merlene was preceded in death by her parents, three brothers, and five sisters; her husband, Cleo Williams; and her daughter, Pam Gordon. She is survived by her son, Alan (Veva) Williams; daughters Debbie (John) Waymire, and Cindy (Frank) Cordell. She has 11 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren, and numerous nieces and nephews.

A viewing will be held at 10 a.m. Tuesday, July 14th 2015 and a memorial service will be held at 11 a.m. at the Eastmont Baptist Church, with a graveside service to follow. Please express your thoughts and memories on the online guest book at [jonesjonesbetts.com](http://jonesjonesbetts.com). Arrangements are by Jones & Jones-Betts Funeral Home.

# Previous Events

## Service

JUL 14. 11:00 AM (PT)

Eastmont Baptist Church  
400 S Kentucky  
East Wenatchee, WA 98802

## Visitation

JUL 14. 10:00 AM - 10:45 AM (PT)

Eastmont Baptist Church  
400 S Kentucky  
East Wenatchee, WA 98802

# Tribute Wall

KE

“ I have so many fun memories to share, I don't even know where to start! Grandma Merlene used to watch me while my parents worked, and us grandkids were always over at her house. Grandma refereed the girl vs boy fights, and tried to make sure us girls were cleaned up and "decent" (no easy feat for a tomboy like me). She would save her JCPenny's and Sears catalogs, and we would either cut them up to make paper dolls, or draw mustaches and beards on the models and put them back in the rack for her to find...we thought we were so funny, messing with grandma's catalogs!

In high school, I would stop by to hang out and slip grandpa a few contraband McDonalds french fries under the counter, away from grandma's watchful eyes (he was on a diet). I would watch what grandma did in the kitchen, learning the secret of mashed potatoes and chicken n' dumplings. Later, Merlene and Cleo watched my daughter as I attended the college here in town. They doted on her, and enjoyed having her 5 days a week. I moved back to Wenatchee after college in 2001, as my daughter was ready to start kindergarten, and ended up working 60-80 hours a week for the USFS. Again, my daughter spent a lot of time with grandma and grandpa. I am so fortunate that my daughter got to enjoy her great-grandparents. She had so much fun and learned a lot about the importance of being there for family, and was very close to grandma and grandpa.

Grandma always made a big deal out of the holidays, or when any of the grandkids or great-grandkids, nieces, or nephews had an event or a recital. Grandma had a way of making everything seem fun and exciting, and making you feel special.

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Kelly - July 10, 2015 at 11:14 AM

BJ

“ I have so many great memories of my grandma but one of my favorites is from one of many sleepovers my cousins Melody, Heidi and I had at her house when we were kids. Grandma made the best mashed potatoes ever and loved to cook for anyone who would let her! We made up a song about her mashed potatoes as she was cooking them for us in her kitchen and she just laughed and laughed! We had the best time with her. I also loved staying overnight during the holidays, we would watch frosty the snowman while she made us endless treats and then she would make us watch The Lawrence Welk show afterwards :-). She made all of her Grandkids childhoods so great with so many fun memories and loved spending time with her Great Grandchildren as well. She was the best grandma and we will miss her so much!!

*Buffi Jones*

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**Buffi Jones** - July 08, 2015 at 07:09 PM

KC

“ 23 files added to the album Photos of Merlene



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**Kelly Cordell** - July 08, 2015 at 06:29 PM