



Helen J. Njus

February 10, 1940 - February 25, 2026

Helen Jane Pyle was born to Rose (Peers) & Mark Pyle on Feb. 10, 1940 in the Wenatchee Deaconess Hospital. On Dec. 29, 1976 she married John Nelson Njus. They made their home in a vintage house on the outskirts of Story City, Iowa, and were active members of St. Petri Lutheran Church. John traveled extensively overseas for Sauer Danfoss Manufacturing & Helen taught at Iowa State University until accepting a position motivating volunteers in Iowa & Nebraska for the fraternal benefit society, Lutheran Brotherhood, now Thrivent Financial (1985-2002). Their son, Joel Nelson Njus, was born in the Story City on February 23, 1978. In 2005 the Helen & John purchased the Bolenbaugh House on Miller Street in Wenatchee that was built in the 1800s. She is survived by husband John, son Joel, grandchildren Renzo Njus (mother Annie Harris) & Jade Njus (mother Kat Sung).

Educational accomplishments include: Wenatchee High School, 1958, Graduate; University of Washington, Seattle, 1961, Bachelor of Science, Home Economics & Home Economics Education, Vocational Certificate; Western Michigan University, 1967, Master of Arts, Home Economics Education; Purdue University, 1974, Post Masters, Education; Iowa State University, 1977, Doctor of Philosophy, Consumer Education.

Dr. Njus's education career started after she served as Assistant Catering Manager for Clark's Restaurants in Seattle: Department Head High School Vocational Home Economics, Cleveland HS, Seattle Public Schools, 1967-1972. She held teaching, research & curriculum writing positions at North

Dakota State University & the universities she attended. She authored six Refereed Publications & dozens of other publications.

In retirement Helen's interest turned to the field of Mental Health: Completed 40-hour training & passed as a Certified Mental Health First Aid Instructor, June 2009 & taught Mental Health First Aid to a cross-section of the population in the Wenatchee Valley; Member of the Chelan- Douglas Quality Review Team for the Regional Support network 2009 to 2011; Active in NAMI Chelan-Douglas 2008-2011 including hosting police officers as part of their Crisis Intervention Training. Helen pursued mental health educational opportunities & in Spring 2009 completed Peer Counselor Training & passed the Washington State Certification Test. In retirement she enjoyed being a peer counselor for Recovery Innovations.

Helen was active in Dr. George Bower's Wenatchee Civic Orchestra, Polio Outreach, Heritage Society of the Mid-Columbia, Wenatchee Area Genealogy Society, Columbia Basin Cruisers RV, & the Wenatchee Kennel Club (WKC). In 2017 Njuses formed the Jane Nelson, LLC., in order to secure property to WKC for a Training Center in East Wenatchee.

Helen could never quite wipe all the tears from her eyes that were her reaction to learning of the hidden family history of severe mental illness that deprived their son of the successful, creative, family-centered life that his talents could have afforded him.

Please express your thoughts and memories on the online guestbook at jonesjonesbetts.com. Arrangements by Jones & Jones – Betts Funeral Home. Remembrances may be made to the Wenatchee Kennel Club, Box 805, Wenatchee, WA 98807. #482

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

MAR 27. 11:00 AM (PT)

Jones & Jones ~ Betts Funeral Home
302 9thStreet
Wenatchee, WA 98801
(509) 662-1561
dante@jonesjonesbetts.com

Tribute Wall



“ Jones & Jones - Betts Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Helen J. Njus



Jones & Jones~Betts Funeral Home - March 27 at 02:57 PM

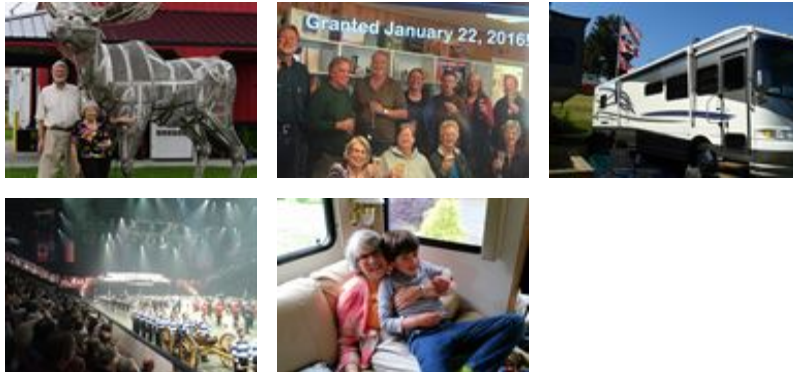


“ Helen, Thank you for a beautiful and long friendship, always ready to visit and remember the good ole days in Iowa. I will miss you Helen! Norah McCorkle

Norah McCorkle - March 27 at 12:11 PM



“ 131 files added to the album LifeTributes



Jones & Jones~Betts Funeral Home - March 24 at 11:25 AM

KP

“ I remember sitting at your table and talking many a night in the 80s. Helen taking me to the ISU student restaurant. Typing a paper on your apple 2 with a dot matrix printer, that saved me tons of hours with that project. Thinking of you John are prayers for you at this time. Klinton Patterson

Klinton Patterson - March 09 at 05:16 PM

OR

“ My dear friend and neighbor Helen. Working with Helen in the Mental Health field was such an awarding time in our lives. Helen will be missed terribly; a very smart woman. I will cherish all the great memories in my heart. RIP my dear friend.

Oralia Rodriguez - March 05 at 01:25 PM

WH

“ That Helen! I will miss her. She was great company. She was a great person. My condolences to John and Evita.

Wade Hockett - March 03 at 07:10 PM

NS

“ I remember finding the perfect home for you both, complete with a back gate entrance to a dear friend's home. I have enjoyed watching it evolve over the years as you accommodated your RV lifestyle and knowing the community has marveled at your lights for all holidays and current events. Helen's advocacy for mental health and her love for her son is a true commitment to a mother's dedication; may she rest in peace.

Nannette Saint - March 02 at 01:00 PM

MJ

“ *Helen and John , John and Helen - what a marvelous team! Her life (and John's) touched so many people in uplifting ways. Always a teacher, Helen looked for ways to encourage others in their quest for a better life. Soli Deo Gloria and to her memory praise and thanksgiving.*

Margaret and Rolfe Johnstad - February 27 at 12:35 PM