



Marili Libke Benjamin

February 23, 1922 - January 22, 2010

Marili (Huffman) Libke Benjamin passed away peacefully in her sleep at her Columbia Heights home in Wenatchee on January 22, 2010. Marili was born on February 23, 1922, in Boville, ID to Frank and Mildred Huffman. She was the oldest of their three daughters. Marili spent her early childhood years in Quincy, WA, where her father owned and operated the local wheat grain elevator and regional hardware store. The Huffman family, which now included younger sisters, Roberta and Mary Frances, moved to Wenatchee when Marili was in grade school. Mildred ran the home and father, Frank, commuted to and from the Quincy business. Marili won top academic honors at Wenatchee High School and then attended the University of Washington, where she was a member of the Pi Beta Phi Sorority. She met her husband, Al Libke of Tacoma, in the summer of 1941, while he was a rookie baseball player with the Wenatchee Chiefs, which were partially owned by her father, Frank. Marili and Al were married on October 5, 1941, and moved to Seattle, where Al played for the Seattle Rainiers baseball team and then worked in the wartime ship yards in Tacoma. Their first son, Al Jr., was born in 1944, and the young family moved to Cincinnati in 1945, when Al was drafted by the Cincinnati Reds major league baseball team. Their daughter, Marili "Muffy" was born in 1946. Marili and Al then moved the growing family to Los Angeles, where Al played for the AAA Hollywood Stars baseball team in 1947 and 1948. As a player's wife, Marili and her children would sit near folks like Groucho Marks, a big fan of her husband. Marili's second son, Robert, was born in 1949, when

the family moved back to Wenatchee for good. Marili's husband first joined Allen Insurance in Wenatchee and later, became an agency principle at the Flannigan, Libke and Jones Insurance Agency. That became a family agency named Libke Insurance Associates, first owned by Marili's son, Rob, and now owned by Marili's grandson, Jeff Rounds. Once settled, Marili and Al Libke never left Wenatchee, where they raised their family and remained married for 62 years. Both Marili and Al were deeply involved in building and serving the community. Al operated and expanded his agency, helped found the Exchange Club, worked to establish Little League baseball, sat on the School Board and was a YMCA board member and President. Marili was the homemaker and matriarch of the family. She was involved with her PEO group, the Pi Beta Phi alumni, an orthopedic service organization, a hiking group and volunteered at Central Washington Hospital and the St. Luke's Episcopal alter guild. Marili was an advocate for her children and the grandchildren that followed and she and Al took great pleasure in having their grandchildren join them on their boat, the Marili Along, which they operated out of Oak Harbor, or having family as guests on their long winter vacations on the island of Maui. Marili was a very bright, tenacious and extremely loyal friend to many in the Wenatchee Valley. She was an excellent bridge player and a marvelous cook. Her cookies and cakes were famous among her children's friends. By example, she and Al Sr. taught their children and grandchildren that commitment to family and friends is the most important thing in this life. Marili's husband, Al Libke, passed away in March, 2003. The family and hundreds of friends mourned the loss of this great, generous, gentle, gracious and loving man. Then, through a remarkable coincidence, Marili became reacquainted with her first "beau" from Wenatchee High School, Paul Benjamin. Paul also had recently lost his spouse of many years. In an amazing story of rediscovered friendship and love, Marili and Paul had a marvelous renewed courtship and were married in April 2004, in Wenatchee. Paul and Marili remembered fondly their many hiking, skiing and camping adventures of younger years in Wenatchee. Marili and Paul very much

enjoyed traveling together by plane, train and automobile. The couple moved into the Columbia Heights retirement facility in 2004. In April 2007, Marili survived the unexpected death of her youngest son, Rob. She received great support from Paul, her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren and her deep and abiding faith. Her daughter, Marili, moved back to Wenatchee after Rob's death and became administrator of the Columbia Heights retirement and assisted living facility, which was a great source of comfort to Marili. Marili was playing bridge and socializing right up to the day of her death. She will be dearly missed by all. Marili was truly an exceptional lady. She was extremely bright, strong in her beliefs and her loyalties, and blessed with a generous and courageous heart.

She is survived by her second husband, Paul Benjamin; her children, Al Libke, Jr., M.D. of Ketchum, ID and Marili "Muffy" Libke Rounds and her life partner, Gary Haugsven of Wenatchee; and by Paul's daughters, Sheila Benjamin and Susan and Scott Duink, all of Florida. She is further survived by her grandchildren, Jeffrey Rounds and wife, Jill of Wenatchee, Corby Rounds and wife, Rebecca of Ellensburg, Charyn Rounds Lhyle and husband, Marcke of Kirkland, WA and Kenna Libke of Boston and Hailey, ID; and great-grandchildren, Quinn and Connor Rounds of Wenatchee, Ryan and Mason Lhyle of Kirkland and Jocelyn and Avery Rounds of Ellensburg.

Funeral Services for Marili will be held Thursday, February 11, 2010, at 2:00 p.m. at St. Luke's Episcopal parish in Wenatchee, WA. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests remembrances to the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, the YMCA of Wenatchee, or the Central Washington Hospital Building Fund.

Arrangements are by Jones & Jones-Betts Funeral Home, Wenatchee.

Previous Events

Service

FEB 11. 2:00 PM (PT)

St. Luke's Episcopal
428 King
Wenatchee, WA 98801