

My Mom, Nancy Jean Merrill Richter, is a very difficult person to describe in words. When she was young, one might have used the word *independent* to describe her. As the only girl with three brothers she did not refrain from holding her own and standing up for herself. She graduated high school and went on to obtain her bachelor's and master's degree, all the while making sure it was known that she was going to do it on her own, even if it meant having to part with her beloved motorcycle to see it through.

Along the way she met my Dad and came to be known by another word, *wife*. She would freely admit that she was not the typical rancher's *wife*, but that was never really to be expected. Although she had her differences in her actions and demeanor the love that she had for my Dad was without comparison. Anyone who might doubt that love only has to refer to the first word referenced above and realize that despite being *independent* she stuck with my Dad for 37 years as the greatest partner in life that he could ever ask for and always as the prettiest girl that he had ever seen.

Another word that Mom was never afraid to shy away from was *work*. She spent 30 years of *work* at Western Dakota Tech, although her devotion to the school and her students hardly made the definition of the word apply. She personally invested herself in all of her students, taking pride in their achievements and suffering with them during their failures. She absolutely looked forward to planning each year's graduation ceremony, beaming with pride each May at the fruits of her *work*. This devotion and sacrifice is what led one former co-worker to tell a newer employee at the school who, after Mom had retired, was recalling that she used to *work* there, that she in fact hadn't worked at WDT, "she was WDT!" It was this devotion to her life's *work* that she would later bring to the Meade School Board, allowing her yet another way to affect the lives of young people in the way only she could.

Even after retirement, Mom continued to find *work* in a number of different places. One might say that the word that would best describe her post-retirement would be *live*. Mom found a number of ways to *live* her life, including through her fireworks, buying and selling at rummage sales and flea markets, fishing at the river, and most predominantly through her time spent with her friends. Being with them allowed her to *live* every day, and she relished the experiences that she had with them and the times she shared with them.

Overall, the best word to describe my Mom would have to be *love*. It was *love* that she consistently bestowed upon me and my brother as we grew up under her guidance. He and I weren't always the easiest to *love*, but she *loved* us none the less, without question or prejudice. It was *love* that she provided to my *wife*, helping to guide another *independent* woman through the challenges of being married to a Richter male. And it was most definitely *love* that she provided to her four grandchildren, the kind that can never be replicated, and the amount of which could never be matched.

In reality, there really are no words that could truly describe my Mom. The number of people whose lives she influenced is unfathomable. She was a one-of-a-kind person, the kind of person that I will always look up to, respect, and admire. Although she is gone much too soon and, as she would be the first to tell you, left a number of her own goals unachieved, she still leaves a standard of life that all of us can only hope to strive for, and a lasting impact on each of us that will never be forgotten but will always be missed.

In Loving Memory Of



Nancy Jean Richter

1949 ~ 2013



*God saw she was getting tired
and a cure was not to be
So He put His arms around her
and whispered "come to Me."
With tearful eyes we watched her suffer
and saw her fade away
Although we loved her dearly
We could not make her stay.
A golden heart stopped beating
Hardworking hands to rest
God broke our hearts to prove to us
He takes the very best.*

In Loving Memory Of
Nancy Jean Merrill Richter

Born
March 12, 1949
Hot Springs, South Dakota

Died
December 27, 2013
Sturgis, South Dakota

Funeral Service
Friday, January 3, 2014, at 3:00 p.m.
First Presbyterian Church

Officiating
Pastor Denzel Nonhof
Pastor Harold Delbridge

Musical Selections
"Last Date"
"Strong Enough To Bend"
"Walking In The Sunshine"

Honorary Pallbearers
All Family and Friends

Inurnment
At a Later Date
White Owl Cemetery

Memorial Donations may be made to:
Abbott House Foundation
PO Box 700
Mitchell, SD 57301-0700
www.abbotthouse.org

*The family invites you to join them for fellowship and lunch at the
Sturgis Vet's Club immediately following the funeral service.
We thank you for your presence and condolences.*