

MOM a.k.a. Nancy (Wood) Parent

by Annette Aben



My mom's name is Nancy (Wood) Parent, 10/27/37 - 11/26/09

"You're mother would have LOVED this! What a terrific idea to hold her memorial here."

I heard that all day, in fact I would venture to say that my siblings heard it also from nearly everyone who attended the party we threw to celebrate her life the week after she died. See we chose to hold a party for her at an antique store/art gallery about a mile from the home she cherished for the past 37 years of her life. Most people would have decided on a church basement perhaps the local veteran's hall or possibly even chosen a nice restaurant where everyone could sit down and share a more structured meal, not for Nancy. We embraced a different perspective on her death and came up with this idea because it was the way she spent many Saturdays of her life, bopping through antique stores with her buddies then stopping off somewhere interesting for a sandwich and a cup of soup. So in addition to the venue, we asked the caterer to serve soups, sandwich fixings, fresh fruit, and cookies. We felt that it would be a nicer memory for those who gathered to always see her every time they wandered into an art gallery, strolled through an antique store or sat down for a nice hot cup of soup and a hearty sandwich.

Remembering Nancy in conjunction with something that would bring a smile seemed to honor her.

For years I worked in a funeral home and I always found it most disturbing that people did what they "thought" they should do. From the vigil to the paperwork there just seemed to be a routine to everything. Occasionally there would be something interesting to break from the "norm" and

the result was remarkable. People walking out of the home after a particularly different service were light hearted, smiling, keeping the memories of their dear departed at such a high vibration you could almost feel that person floating right along with them, arms over shoulder wishing them well. Not that crying isn't an important part of mourning and letting go, it is, but many prefer to replace their thoughts of despair with thoughts that bring a smile simply because the sooner those thoughts can be embraced, the sooner everyone, including the one who died, can be at peace.

So having released my mother to Spirit on November 26, 2009, I can tell you from my heart that she is missed. There are many times I pick up the phone to call her (which I did nearly every day during the final four weeks of her life when she was so ill) and realize she wouldn't be there to answer. I'll see a holiday display or sale at one of her favorite stores and remind myself to tell her about it. As I am planning meals I'll be thinking about how she made her vegetable beef soup, lasagna or oatmeal cake and remember how good they tasted. Her smile lit up her face and her laughter was much like that of a little girl when she was truly tickled. Her party was something I know she would have enjoyed not only because of where it was and what we served but because all her children were there, people were sharing happy memories and that is the way she would have wanted to celebrated.

When people will ask me how I am doing, I always tell them I have my moments but the truth be known, for the most part I am at peace because I know mom is at peace.





Imagine a child who ate her share of alphabet soup and plenty of Alpha-bits cereal as she was growing up. Picture this same child being sent to her room to ponder her sassy ways and her only company was a dictionary and a set of encyclopedias. Of course her favorite toys were paper and pens and naturally she enjoyed reading more than playing with dolls. Surrounded by all the raw materials, is it any wonder Annette grew up to be a writer?

Her most recent publication, **PERSPECTIVE, it's all about replacing one thought with another**, is available through **Amazon.com** and the current work, **u got angels**, is due out in time for Holy Day giving. Check out her website **annetteaben.com** for updates on all projects including a collaborative effort between Annette and Tracy (Domestic Gourdess) Swartz.

do all these words make me look fat?

"I am not what happened to me... I am what I choose to become."
Carl Jung

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