



William (Bill) Veroske

August 22, 1924 - September 18, 2019

William Roy “Bill” Veroske (8/22/1924 – 9/18/2019)

Born in Chelan, WA, August 22, 1924, to John and Ina Pearl (Anthony) Veroske.

Passed away in Boise Idaho, September 18, 2019, at age 95.

Graduated Chelan High School – 1942.

Married Wilma Helen Cox February 23, 1944. 75 years married.

Bill was raised in the Ardenvoir region up the Entiat River, Entiat, WA, in the North Cascades mountains. Father, John, a Polish immigrant, farmed and worked at the nearby Harris Mill. Mother Pearl, from North Dakota, tended to the home, poultry, food animals, the garden and raised five children. Pearl was active in establishing a public school every 5 miles in the region. Bill attended one of those 1- room schools through the 8th grade. That fall, he moved to Chelan with older brother, Jack, where they rented a small home and attended Chelan High School. Bill spent summers in the Ardenvoir where he gained a Dept. of Labor and Industries permit at age 13 to work in the Harris Mill as “handling box shook”. This was a prized possession that he displayed proudly in his office throughout his life. He met his future wife, Wilma Helen Cox while in high school. A ticket seller at the Ruby Theater, Wilma would let Bill in to sit in the last row where they would hold hands when Wilma wasn't selling tickets or candy. These Jr. HS sweethearts married on

February 23, 1944 , a marriage that flourished with love and adoration for over 75 years.

Bill always claimed that in school he wasn't a very good student. Report cards showed otherwise. In high school, he was Class President and ASB President. He also excelled in football, baseball and track where he set a Chelan High School record for the shot put at over 50', a record that stood for 52 years. In 1994, he helped mentor another CHS student, Michael Young, who then set a new record. He also won a Golden Glove boxing award in 1941 at an Elks/A.A.U. boxing tournament in Yakima.

Bill attended the University of Washington in Seattle for a semester before entering the army on Dec. 1, 1943. He served our country for two years in the US Army Air Corps as a B-17 turret gunner, honorably discharged as a Corporal on December 21, 1945.

Following discharge from military service, Bill spent two years on bed rest due to a rare lung disease contracted in Georgia. He busied himself and provided some income by making small pipe cleaner animals (rabbits squirrels skunks etc.) that local Chelan merchants sold. Following recovery, he worked as a clerk at Chelan Hardware. He often quoted his father's financial advice: "Son, always save 10% of everything you earn." He credits his discipline to this single statement to saving enough to make a down payment on the purchase of a decrepit 12-acre apple orchard on Lake Chelan's north shore in 1950. His determination, hard work and skills as an apple grower became evident when he cured the orchard's ills in his first year, resulting in success that allowed him to pay off his purchase after his first crop.

This was the beginning of a 38-year career in the apple industry. As a land developer, he acquired a succession of land parcels, developed them into highly productive apple orchards and then sold each in order to develop the

next orchard. Throughout this time, he provided summer employment for numerous Chelan junior high and high school kids teaching job skills, accountable work ethics and respect.

He worked closely with Washington State University's Tree Fruit Experiment Department including dedicating several acres of one orchard for development by its students for experimental planting and tree cultivation. Bill's success led to visits from apple growers all over the world, a cover article in "Grower" magazine, and his visiting the USSR in 1991 with a contingent of apple growers from the US and around the world. On this trip, he gained a greater appreciation of our free-market system as they visited high quality government orchards but also saw crops rotting in the fields and could rarely find fresh fruits in city markets. Throughout his life after this experience, he liked to quote one resident who stated, "We pretend to work and the government pretends to pay us". In 1988 he and Wilma sold their last orchard, 37 acres above his first orchard, to Joe Snyder, Bill's key employee of 30 years. That property is now the site of Benson Vineyards Estate Winery, one of Lake Chelan's finest wineries.

Bill, with Wilma's dedication and energy, contributed extensively to their community. Many of the organizations they started or contributed to exist today. With some decade overlap:

1950s:

- Helped establish and grow Echo Valley ski area.
- Helped establish Cub Scout Pack 59 in 1959, acting as its first scoutmaster. Wilma was one of its first den mothers.
- Chelan City Planning commission, City Council.
- President of Echo Valley Ski Area.
- Helped establish the Apple cup unlimited hydroplane racing on Lake Chelan.

1960s, 70s and 80s:

- Mayor of Chelan (early 60s).
- Coach and occasional umpire for Chelan Little League baseball.
- National Ski Patrol at Mission Ridge for seven years.
- Helped established a volunteer ski patrol program and training at Echo Valley.
- Helped acquire and install the Echo Valley Poma lift.
- Chelan-Douglas Country Farmers Home Administration Loan Committee.
- Wenoka Credit Corporation Loan Committee.
- Trout, Inc., Board of Directors
- Lake Chelan Recreation Association Board member.
- Chelan School District Maintenance and Operations School Levy Committee.
- President of the Men's Division of Lake Chelan Golf Club.
- Motivating force behind creating the Chelan High School boys and girls golf program.
- Helped start a 3-on-3 basketball tournament, drawing teams statewide, to benefit the Chelan High School athletic program.

1990s and 2000s:

- Trustee on the Lake Chelan Community Hospital Foundation Board. Instrumental in securing a large contribution from Edna Bragg to establish the Bragg Scholarship Fund. The fund has given over \$1,000,000 in healthcare education scholarships to Chelan residents so far.
- Helped mentor promising Chelan athletes including promising shot-put athlete Michael Young who broke Bill's 52 year record in 1994.
- First inductee into Lake Chelan High School Hall of Fame along with former State Senator Linda Parlette Evans and three others.
- Recipient of North Central Washington Educational Service District's Friend of Children award.

(Note: True to Bill's spirit, he entered a BioGift Anatomical Donor program, desiring to give even after his passing.)

Bill (age 84) and Wilma left their home of nearly 30 years on Lake Chelan in late 2008 and moved to Portland, Oregon, to be closer to son, Nick, and their sole grandchild, Ariel Veroske. Bill remained active, golfing in the summer, skiing in the winter, daily exercise walks and gardening. Still an expert skier he made his last run off the top of 9800 foot Mount Bachelor, Oregon, at age 86, still making his signature parallel turns. He, Wilma and Nick continued returning to Chelan twice annually to maintain their lakefront property and visit friends until the property was sold in 2014.

in the 1990s, Bill began experiencing hearing loss attributed to his time in the Army Air Corps and years of operating orchard equipment. In 2016 he was diagnosed with early stages of dementia. The combined effects of inability to engage socially began to take their grip. In late 2018 it became necessary to move Bill and Wilma into separate memory and assisted-living facilities. They achieved 75 years of marriage on February 23, 2019. In August, 2019, Bill moved to Boise, Idaho, close to Wilma and their daughter.

Wilma was with him at the time of his death holding his hand one more time - and no doubt feeling the love from their high school days when they would hold hands in the Ruby Theater, and of a beautiful lifetime together.

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Survivors include his wife of 75 years , Wilma, age 96 of Boise, Idaho, son Nick Veroske of Portland Oregon, daughter Sally Hunt of Boise Idaho, and his sole grandchild, Ariel Veroske, of Denver Colorado.

Bill was preceded in death by his four siblings, brothers Jack and Fred "Fritz" Veroske, and sisters Helen Beamguard Fitzpatrick and Susie Olson Hendrickson.

Precht Rose Chapel, Chelan Washington, is in charge of arrangements. Services will be announced later. Inquiries and memories can be sent to Nick Veroske, 3870 NW Banff Dr., Portland, OR 97229; email nick@willamette-equities.com; Cell/Text: 503-577-6903.

Bill wanted this statement in his obituary:

Do not stand at my grave and weep.

I am not there. I do not sleep.

I am a thousand winds that blow.

I am the diamond glints on snow.

I am the sunlight on ripened grain.

I am the gentle autumn's rain.

When you awaken in the morning's hush,

I am the swift uplifting rush

Of quiet birds in circled flight.

I am the soft star that shines at night.

Do not stand at my grave and cry.

I am not there. I did not die.

(Author unknown)

Cemetery Details

Chelan Fraternal Cemetery

815 N. Bradley St.
Chelan, WA 98816

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

OCT **10**. 10:00 AM (PT)

Chelan Fraternal Cemetery
815 N. Bradley St.
Chelan, WA 98816

Tribute Wall



“ *William (Bill) Veroske*

January 29, 2023 at 08:49 AM



“ *3 files added to the album Bill Veroske obituary*



Mike Boyd - October 07, 2019 at 04:24 PM