



Gerald Leland Giesbrecht

November 11, 2014

Gerald Leland Giesbrecht, (known to many as Jerry), died at Doctors Medical Center in Modesto, CA on November 11, 2014 of Congestive Heart Failure. He was 72.

This is a story of a half century of marriage, a journey of love and adventure told by me, Jane Giesbrecht, Jerry's wife of 52 years and daughter of John B and Susan Koehn of Winton and Atwater rural communities.

Gerald was born in Merced, CA , on November 19,1941, the son of Frank and Edna Giesbrecht of Winton, CA. in Merced County. He lived in the country on Eucalyptus Avenue near the town of Winton, CA on a farm called Giesbrecht Bros. were they grew peaches and almonds. His Uncle Levi was the first boy born in Winton, CA in 1911. His father, Frank, owned a manufacturing facility in Winton called G&M Manufacturing designing and building agricultural equipment for farming use such a plows, furrows, scrappers and tomato harvesters.

Jerry attended Winton Elementary and Livingston High School graduating in 1959. He was a member of FFA and excelled in Agriculture Judging of Fruit Trees at the State Level winning First Place in his Senior year. He won a School Letter in Track and Field for Pole Vaulting. We met when Jerry was a senior in high school, I was sixteen and a year later we married. We lived on Center Street in Winton and, following in his fathers footsteps, he managed G & M Manufacturing for several years.

We both had adventurous spirits; I wanted to move to Australia. Instead, following in the footsteps of a man we greatly admired, Gerald Mininger, an Almond Grower and Uncle to Jane, we moved to Greeley, CO. It was a cow town full of dung but the backdrop of the majestic Rocky Mountains made up for the smell. It was somewhere we'd never been and it was good. We lived there for eight years. In Greeley CO he worked for Farmhand Inc, serving as Plant Manager, then for severals years for Monfort of Colorado as their Purchasing Agent. He last worked for Hydraulics Unlimited (Harsh Hydraulics) as the Plant Manager. During this time we purchased an eighty acre farm in the Windsor

community with a stunning view of the Rockies. He grew corn for the Cattle Industry while working in Eaton, CO for Hydraulics Unlimited. Thus began his love of acquisition and farming.

Jerry was intelligent, full of life and I longed for more adventure. I suggested that we find something he could put his hand to; something he could call his own. We bought a business from a Canadian industrial leader, Carl Issac called Denair Manufacturing on Center street in Turlock, CA later moving to a facility on Glenwood Avenue. We built farm and Industrial implement trailers. Later he expanded the product line to include Produce trailers for the Produce Industry. Jerry had many treasured customers who made his livelihood possible providing us with untold riches for “people” were an investment he could not resist. He had a great love for Produce Growers and spent many hours on the road visiting the growing regions of the Central San Joaquin Valley, Santa Maria, Salinas, Yuma, AZ, Florida, Texas, Rhode Island and many rich agricultural areas in between. Produce became a passion of his and the fields of lettuce, broccoli, cabbage, spinach and carrots to name a few, even the flowers grown in the cooler climates in our coastal areas, is where he wanted to be.

We traveled the world over by sea, by plane and by car putting many thousands of miles on his favorite car, always a Cadillac, because it had room for his rather massive frame which seemed to grow with his success. For years we labored together, wanting always to provide our customers with quality. Jerry believed in the goodness of man. He never doubted man’s ability to greatness. Jerry was a lover of music and had over 30,000 songs on his computer and a Bose stereo system throughout the house. We spent many evenings rocking out to good old rock and roll. He was an avid reader and while traveling down the road we listen to his great collection of books on his iPhone. His favorite book would have to be Don Quixote de la Mancha and Moby Dick. His passions at different times in his life included the collection of cigars and his wine cellar is stocked with fine reds. Then came the age of digital and internet, computers and iPads and he was hooked once again into that realm of possibilities He would lament at times of how he was born too soon. He was very fond of his cats who spent many hours on his lap while working from home in his last years. The San Francisco Giant’s winning of the World Series was the last event he watched on TV.

Jerry was witty and clever guy, never afraid to turn a pun. He said once, “Fishing spoils a good boat ride,” and when I asked if he could be at Heidi’s for Easter dinner he said, “If Jesus could get up from the dead for Easter morning, I think I should be able to make it to Heidi’s for Easter afternoon.” He wrote me many notes, one said this:

Jane,

I think of the walls between myself and me. I don't remember building them.

Did they come about as leftovers along my way?

Or was it material left behind by some forgotten builder?

Some man with big ideas and little mortar.

Jerry

He dearly loved his two children. Heidi, his devoted daughter spent the last year and a half caring for him daily in our home, and his son Bradley would come home to watch the San Francisco 49ers games with his father and was always at the ready when emergencies of life came about. Jerry was active in his community for a time serving on the Chamber of Commerce board and was one of four men of the Athletic Booster Club, Stanislaus County Arrowhead Club, who were responsible for building the first Running Track at California State University Stanislaus.

He leaves to mourn his loss, two beautiful and accomplished children; Bradley and Heidi, and three grandchildren, Scarlett Erisina of Manhattan Emerson Liberato of San Francisco and Ethan Leland of Turlock, CA. His mother Edna who turned ninety-nine a few weeks ago, now residing in Missouri near her daughter, Jerry's sister Carolyn Giesbrecht Peaster and sister Verna Giesbrecht Peaster of Wisconsin. His father, Frank and our son Michael preceded him in death.

What more can I say? We loved each other and life was good. We thank each and every one of you who gave of yourselves, you enriched our lives and we are grateful. I don't know how to tell my mate of over fifty years, the father of our three children, Bradley, Michael and Heidi goodbye. Maybe our little family will not say goodbye, instead we will say, "Fare thee well, until we meet again" Alice Cooper said, "It's just a heartache that got in my eye. And you know I never cry."

We owe a debt of gratitude to the Turlock Fire Department who were called frequently to assist us and to Hospice and the Palliative Care providers. Your special and caring ways provided quality care.

Tribute Wall



“ *Gerald Leland Giesbrecht*

January 28, 2023 at 09:01 AM