**Chapter 40 – DAD & MOM PORTER**

Dad has always been healthy; he ate good foods and didn’t eat sweets. Mom was a good cook and fixed good, nutritious meals most of the time. Dad would exercise, and when he and mom were visiting us in Arizona, he would walk five miles each morning. He stood tall and erect. Dad was a handsome man and I was proud of him. He loved mom very much and called her his “Bride”. Dad was a wonderful father too and he was a spiritual man, he loved the Lord and did his best to serve Him and others. Dad loved to read the scriptures and when the day came that the blood vessels burst in his eyes and he couldn’t see to read his scriptures, that was a sad day. Dad was able to get a recorder, so he could listen to his scriptures and church history tapes and that was a blessing, but he couldn’t watch his favorite show on television “Lawrence Welch” and couldn’t see well. I never heard him complain much, however.

Dad always had good heath until later in life when he had a hard time breathing. He was diagnosed with “Anti Trypsin Deficiency”, an inherited disease. He said the doctor told him that one of the symptoms was that you would never get your “second breath” when you ran. Dad said he wondered about that when he was a youth. Dad started going downhill and eventually had to have breathing devises and eventually had to be on oxygen at night, and then all the time. Mom would want him to eat, and she would get upset when he wouldn’t. She would say “Glen, you have to eat to keep up your strength”, but he would say “Mildred, I don’t feel like eating, I’m not hungry.” That was a hard time for them as Mom was so worried about him. She loved him so much and was worried he would pass away and leave her. He did in pass away in 1991. He was 83 years old. We all missed him so much. He had asked us children if we would speak at his funeral. I told him I didn’t know if I could, but the Lord blessed me and we were all able to speak.

Dad got phenomena and was in the hospital. He was so miserable and wanted to pass away, but Mom was holding him here as she didn’t want to lose him. The last night, Mom had been there all day and was so tired. We finally talked her into leaving with Bryce, so she could get some sleep. After she left, Georgia and I went over by him and said “Dad, Mom has gone home to get some sleep. You can go now. You have suffered long enough.” Dad bore a strong testimony to us of the truthfulness of the gospel, of the Book of Mormon, of the Prophet, Joseph Smith and our current prophet and said “It’s true”. I told him that I always knew that he knew the church was true. He told Georgia and I that he loved us very much and loved all his family and that he was proud of us. He closed his eyes and was gone. A wonderful, faithful father had gone HOME.

Mom loved her family and she and dad were extra good to Jean and Cindi, after Hal’s death and Mom always invited them to all our family parties or activities. I was glad she did. After Cindi had Samantha, her life was happier. Cindi had gotten on drugs as a teen ager and got pregnant from another drug addict. Cindi & Jean loved Samantha, and this gave Cindi a purpose to life now. But, the drugs got in the way and she had to go in rehab several times. They put Samantha with foster parents. Brian Dugan and his wife (can’t remember her name) took her in as their foster daughter. They didn’t have other children and they loved Samantha. They told the case worker that if in some future time, Cindi wouldn’t be able to raise Samantha, that they wanted to adopt her. They were really good to her. Cindi tried hard and went for three years without using drugs. She even had a great boyfriend, John, who was the owner of a great company, who wanted to marry her if she could give up her drugs. She was on the hard stuff by now and try as she may, she finally took it again and lost Samantha. This was devastating for her. The Dugan’s let her visit Samantha, but she couldn’t take her out of their house. (This picture of Samantha “Sam” was taken shortly before Cindi’s death. I have written about Cindi’s death later on.)

Mom’s sister, Elaine (she was Aunt “Joy” to us) lived in Fillmore when her and Uncle John were raising their family. After Uncle John died of a heart attack, she remarried Jack Harper and they moved to St. George. Mom & Dad used to go stay with them for a couple weeks at a time and Mom and Aunt Joy would have a ball together. They would stay up late at night crocheting, visiting and laughing. After Dad died, Mom would still go down and she would sometimes stay a month or two at a time because both Aunt Joy and Jack loved to have her come. Mom was so much fun to be around. Jack would call her “Mims” and he would say to Aunt Joy “When is Mims coming again, I miss her.” When Aunt Marilyn died of cancer, Uncle June (George Jr. was his name, but he was Uncle June to us nieces & Nephews) and his new wife, Banida moved to Star Valley, Wyoming. He loved it there and wanted Mom to come visit him, as he and Mom had been close too, especially after Dad and Aunt Marilyn passed away. They would call each other about every night and talk. Mom did go up and stayed for a week or two, and they loved her too. They would play games, which Mom loved to do, and laugh and visit. Uncle June didn’t want her to leave and made her promise she would come again soon. She had been there several times and when she passed away, both Uncle June and Banida and Aunt Joy and Jack were so sad as Mom was scheduled to go to both of their homes soon and they were looking forward to it.

I called Aunt Joy today to get her great granddaughter's address for our granddaughter, Chelci. They met at the reunion, and she wants to write to her. While I was talking to Aunt Joy, she expressed her concern for Mom, and mentioned that Mom had told her that she doesn't think her children realize how sick she is. She told Aunt Joy that she went down the steps & outside to get her mail and could hardly make it back up the steps as she was so out of breath. I told Aunt Joy that we are worried too, but don't know what to do as she won't come live with any of us.

Georgia & Rick had their basement fixed into an apartment mainly thinking that Mom & Dad - now Mom would come & live there so they could look out for her and take care of her, but she won't leave all her "stuff" or get rid of any of it so she can. Plus, she doesn't want to leave her home. We were worried and so I talked with Bryce, Kim & Georgia and we decided we needed to clean out her basement and have someone live there to look out for her. We decided to do it on Labor Day since we all had that holiday off. I was somewhat apprehensive about doing this because several year ago, dad had suggested that while he & Mom were on a vacation, maybe us kids could clean out their home. It got on dad's nerves that mom didn't keep the house clean and wouldn't throw anything out. Our family was living in Idaho at the time, so I came down and stayed at Mom & Dads and cleaned all day every day for several days. Bryce & Deanna, Georgia & I think Kim came & helped whenever they could. Bryce & I had problems when one night he & Deanna & I were working and it was late and I made the comment that "I felt sorry for Mom". Bryce got in a rage and said "feel sorry, feel sorry" and he blew up. I had meant that I feel sorry for her that she has this phobia that she can't throw anything away. He thought I meant that I felt sorry for her because we were going to throw her things away. (Actually, we weren't throwing anything away, except spoiled food in her storage room and just garbage. We made sure that it wasn't anything of value or anything she wouldn't want thrown away because we knew it would really upset her. All we were trying to do was organize her things so she could see what she had and be able to get to it and use it) Anyway, Bryce was ranting & raving so I told him he better go home if he was that upset as he was making me upset. That upset him more, and Deanna had to practically drag him out of the house as he was yelling at me. After they left, I started crying and could hardly sleep that night. Bryce had never acted like that to me before. The next morning, he called to apologize and wanted to take me to lunch to make up for it. Deanna later told me that when stress starts to get to Bryce, his eyebrows start twitching and she knows to get him away from the stress, change the subject, etc., as he's about ready to blow.

Anyway, when Mom & Dad came home we expected Mom to be happy to have the house cleaned and organized, but she was really upset because she felt we had thrown things away, and now she didn't know where things were. For weeks, she would call and ask what we had done with such & such. Ken was upset that I had worked so hard and this was the appreciation I got. I guess even with the mess, she knew where things were - anyway, it caused us all a lot of grief - so I determined I would never do that again. Dad even felt bad that he had suggested it, even though he liked how it looked. It didn't stay looking that way very long anyway because Mom doesn't keep it up and put things away. Dad said "she has so many other good qualities that I will just have to put up with this and try not to let it bother me". I am thankful for such a wonderful dad to realize that.

Back to our recent dilemma, Scott & Mishelle were willing to live there and look out after Mom and fix food part of the time for her. Georgia talked to mom about us doing it and Mom was upset as she didn't want us to get rid of any of her things. She wanted us to come and clean for her - wash windows, clean her house, etc. Georgia told her that we would come wash her windows and clean her house in the morning and then in the afternoon we needed to clean out the basement. Georgia said Mom agreed. It turned out that Georgia wasn't able to come and so I ended up cleaning her house and washing her curtains and Kim and his son washed her windows. Kim & I started cleaning out her basement and soon Bryce came, but she was right there to make sure we didn't get rid of anything. I put a couple of things in the garbage, that was garbage, and I saw her take them out. It is so frustrating that she wants us to clean, but will not let us throw anything away. Her house is bulging with junk of all kinds and she keeps going to yard sales every weekend and buys more. She can't get into her rooms because there is so much stuff. We can't clean because there is no place to put the stuff which is on her table, counters, etc. Bryce ended up making Mom upset when he tried to show her all the boxes of yarn that she has and how she should get rid of some of it because she can't possibly use all of it. I think there was 14 boxes of yarn and 25 boxes of material. I stacked toys, etc. that she can give to her grandchildren & great grandchildren for Christmas & Birthday present in one area of the downstairs bedroom. I stacked wedding & shower gifts in the other area - almost to the ceiling. She started to cry as Bryce was getting upset with her - so I told Bryce to "stop" - that it wasn't worth it - that we loved her and can't upset her like this. - Then he was upset with me. There is no way we can get rid of her things - so there is no way anyone can come and live with her.

After Dad's death, she said she couldn't live alone - so I asked Ken if we could sell our home and go live with her and take care of her. We were willing to do it, but she wasn't willing to get rid of anything - so I came home and told Ken we couldn't live with her as there is no room. I'm glad we didn't try as I think it would have been way too hard on all of us, and we needed to not move Jeff another time. She has gotten along all right. But at the present her health is deteriorating and we don't know what to do. We got her a medical alert necklace, but she won't wear it. If she should fall and couldn't get up, or if she had other problems, and was wearing the necklace - all she would have to do is push the button and it would ring at her neighbors and then 911. If the neighbor wasn't home, it would right at another close neighbor, if she wasn't home, it would ring at Bryce’s home. She won't wear it as she resents it - so don't know what to do. I told Aunt Joy this and she said "Yes, that's foolish, that's like having a life preserver in the boat, but not wearing it and if you should fall overboard, you wouldn't have it on and so it wouldn't help you."

Aunt Joy said that she has told Mom how lucky she is to have her children around her (Aunt Joys children all live a long way away) and Mom told her, "Oh I don't know, they don't come to see me very often or call, etc., they are all too busy." That upset me as we are all trying the best we can. I invite her for dinner most Sundays, and I go over and visit and do things for her nearly every Thursday night after I get my hair done which is about 6:00 p.m. Sometimes I go visit Ken's mom, but usually I at least stop over for a few minutes even when I spend the night with Ken's Mom. I usually either take food from home for her or I stop and buy her something to eat. She has a list of things she wants me to do when I go on Thursday nights, and I try to do them for her even though I am so tired from working all day. We went to Jean's grave side service at Morgan last Friday. Bryce took her up since he lives close by, but Ken & I were going for a ride after to see the fall leaves so we took her with us. Two days ago, on Wednesday, was Georgia's son, Bryan's wedding. Bryce again took her, but he left to go home after the wedding and Ken had to go exchange a part - so Deanna & I took her in her wheelchair to Scott's car where we rode over with them to the wedding breakfast. Ken met us there and after the wedding breakfast, we took Mom with us to see Legacy at the Joseph Smith Memorial Building and then Ken wheeled her to the reception which was at an older home near the temple.

Georgia tries to go over on Fridays and vacuum, dust, etc. We both call her about every day to see how she is. Bryce calls her almost every night to check on her and comes to work on his cars at her home - so while there does things for her. I got my hair done on Monday afternoon this week and I brought her some sausage casserole & visited while she ate. I asked if she wanted me to do something for her and she did - I cleaned her linen closet and washed her north bedroom curtains.

Georgia & I have always cleaned mom's house for her, and done thorough cleaning when she would have Daughters of the Pioneer's Meetings at her home or Club, or company was coming to stay overnight with her. I remember Ken getting upset with me when we lived in Ogden and I would go out to visit with Mom and come home tired as I had spent the entire time cleaning Mom's house. I don't mind helping her, but it is frustrating because she expects it and she doesn't try to keep it up. All of us kids and our families go over usually twice a year to work in her yard. Georgia takes Mom shopping for clothes and sometimes groceries - although Mom still drives some, so she goes to the Canned Food Store often by herself. Deanna takes her to the doctors a lot or Georgia. I have taken off work some to do it.

Aunt Esther stopped by Mom's one day when Georgia was there cleaning and Mom had gone to get her hair done. Aunt Esther told Georgia that Mom was lucky to have two daughters who have always cleaned and done things for her - that her kids (Aunt Esthers) don't do things for her - that she does things for them.

We love Mom and she has been a good mom and a great example of faith and love of the Lord. We know she loves us and she is always giving us fruit & vegetables which Uncle Dale or someone gives her - she shares. Plus, she gives us things she gets at yard sales, etc. But it is upsetting to have her tell other people that her kids don't do much for her or seem to care about her.

When I see how she is and how Ken's mom is - it makes me worry about how I will be when I get old. Hope I don't have to live that long to cause problems for my children. I'm sure part of the reason for the way they act is because of their age. I guess that is one of our trials in this life. Don't know if I'm passing the test or not - sure hope so. I do try to show love and respect and concern, but I do get upset with them too often.

With them being widows, they're lonely and want us with them more. With being as busy as I am, I guess I can't understand that, although I do feel sad if our children don't call or come around very often and I'm sure it would be much worse not to have a husband to talk with and be with. And with mom's bad back, it is hard for her. I can understand that a little as my back gives me problems too, but with going to the chiropractor once a week, it helps a lot - and my back isn't anything like my mom's - so I can't complain. She doesn't complain a lot either.

When I ask her how she is, she just says **“I’m a doin”.** Lately she is having problems with fluid in her lungs and around her heart. Her legs & feet swell and the doctor is having her take a pill that makes her go to the bathroom a lot to get rid of the water - and that is a problem for her. She has stomach problems sometimes also, but most of the time she doesn't let it get her down. She keeps going to club, Daughters of the Pioneers, meetings, wedding receptions, funerals, etc., etc. Usually one of the ladies pick her up and take her.

Ken's mom is usually in good spirits when I visit her, and if she isn't, I change the subject. I play rummy with her, cut her hair, and take her to the store or just visit. Bob says she is ornery a lot and negative. I'm sure she is, but we will just have to have patience.

I'm sure I have no idea of their loneliness, pain and problems of old age, and maybe fear of death. I have no right to judge them. I just hope and pray I can have more patience and show them the love I need to.

**Dec. 29, 1997,** I will insert a little more of my frustration about mom here. Ken, being such a wonderful son-in-law, suggested that we have mom come live with us and we would make our family room her bedroom. We would bring over her bed, TV, her books, knitting & other things she likes to do. We have a bathroom just off the family room - so it would be easy for her as she has Blatter and kidney problems and has a hard time making it to the bathroom. She wears "Depends" (like diapers for the elderly) Ken said that she could talk to her friends on the phone, we could fix her meals and be with her in the evenings (we both work during the day) and be here to help her more. I thought she might appreciate this offer as she hates being alone and is worried about her health, etc. Instead she tried to give me reasons why she couldn't come. None were valid. I know it is hard for her to leave her home, but she is 81 and her health is not good and she shouldn't be alone. We suggested this several months ago and have tried to talk to her about it many times, but she is stubborn and won't do it. She says I am too busy. I told her I would even ask to be released from stake relief society counselor to take care of her if I needed to.

Today her and Bryce were arguing because her back is hurting and she wanted him to take her to Dr. Bennett’s. I was planning to, but our car, which Ken drives to work, - wouldn't start so he had to take our other car. Bryce told her that he would take her today, but asked if she wouldn't consider going to Dr. Cordova from now on. Dr. Cordova used to work with Dr. Bennett and now has an office in Clearfield - close by Bryce so Bryce switched and now goes to Dr. Cordova as he is good too and a lot closer. Bryce had talked to Dr. Cordova about Mom and he agreed to take her at the cost she was paying Dr. Bennett - which is $50.00 a month for all the treatments she needs. Most treatments are $35.00 a treatment. Mom got upset and said Dr. Bennett is better and she doesn't want to change. They were arguing and upset with each other and Mom finally said "don't worry about it, I'll have Charlene take me". Charlene is her visiting teacher. She then called me to tell me about her argument with Bryce. I told her it would be a lot easier for Bryce to take her to Dr. Cordova and that he was good too. She imposed on Charlene as she told me that Charlene told her she had planned on taking their Christmas tree down, doing laundry and cleaning house and her husband was home. I don't know what else was said, but Charlene did take Mom.

The people in Mom’s ward think we don't do enough for Mom, but it is because she expects so much of us and uses and manipulates us. She wants us to do things for her at her convenience, not ours. I guess it is her age. Mike said that many of the elderly turn back to childish ways and are stubborn and selfish. I guess that’s it. She called me the other day and said she was supposed to have "Daughters of the Pioneer" meeting at her home on the 7th of January, but that she guessed she would have to drop out of it. I thought she was meaning because she didn't feel good. Her health has been terrible lately. She hasn't gone to church for several weeks because she hasn't felt good enough to go. (A neighbor stops by to take her when she feels she can go.) I said well, maybe she should because of her health. She went on to tell me that her house was so dirty, and she didn't feel good enough to clean it and that Verda would have to have it if she didn't and Verda had already taken her turn. I said why does Verda have to have it? Just start over on the list of members. She was playing a game with me, trying to get me to say I would clean her house so she could have the meeting there. I would also have to fix the refreshments - either me or Georgia. Georgia & I have cleaned her house & helped her make the refreshments for several years when it would be her turn to have club or Daughters of the Pioneers.

I called to talk to Bryce, but Deanna answered, and we talked about the frustrations of coping with Mom. Deanna is a wonderful daughter-in-law. She does a lot for Mom, but she feels used also and gets upset and frustrated with Mom. Bryce called me later and we talked. We decided we needed to get together with Kim and Georgia and brain storm and decide what we can do - so we can help and care for Mom and at the same time be able to cope better so we can eliminate some of these frustrations. We'll meet tomorrow night, Dec. 30, 1997.

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Mom had always had a big raspberry patch, since shortly after they bought the home, and she loved it. Dad would help mom pick them and mom had customers who bought a case or more from her every year. When we moved to Sunset, the kids and I would go help her pick the raspberries and she gave the kids so much for every case they picked. They were happy about the money, but didn’t enjoy picking them so much as they were so close together that you had scratched, and you would find spiders in them sometimes. Ken tried to talk mom into letting him cultivate between the rows, so you could get through them easier. He told her that they would grow better, and they would be easier to pick, but she wouldn’t let him as she thought he would take too many of her raspberries plants out.

My Mom – Update from page 1997 when I talked about us children worrying about how to take care of our mom. She wouldn’t come live with us or Georgia & Rick, she wanted to stay in her home. We got her a medical alert to wear around her neck to push if she fell as it would go to us and if we didn’t answer, it would go to the police and they would come to help her. She wouldn’t wear it, so it wasn’t helpful*.*

*We decided someone needed to live in her basement who could look out for her and fix meals for them and for mom. Bryce’s daughter, Shanna was married to Danny and they had a little daughter and son. Danny was going to college, so we thought it might help them out if they lived there rent free and took care of Grandma. They agreed and we told Mom. She wasn’t very happy about it as she said she wanted her privacy. I got upset with her and told her she was being selfish, that we were trying to help her and she wasn’t willing to let us. She finally agreed. We told her we needed to clean out the basement, but that we would put her stuff in a storage unit close by so she could get her items if she needed them. Georgia & I told her that when we came to clean out the basement, that she needed to stay upstairs. One reason is that we didn’t want her to fall coming down the stairs and the other reason is that Mom is a horter and won’t throw anything away, and we needed to throw some things away. She said she would agree if we would wash her windows, wash her curtains, clean her kitchen (which we did often anyway) and clean out her fridge. We agreed, but on the day we agreed on, Georgia was sick – so I had to do it all. Kim did come and wash her big picture window in the living room. When I finished and went down stairs to clean, I hadn’t been there long, when she appeared down there. She looked in the garbage can and found that I had put some short strands of yarn, a empty thin plastic container that she had had candy in, some miscellaneous small pieces of ribbon, etc. She took them all out and said she needed them. I got upset and told her she didn’t need them, that they were all junk and she couldn’t keep everything. I was tired, so finally left to go home. Mom sure tests our patience at times. We finally got the basement cleaned out and Danny. Shanna & children moved in. Mom still wasn’t very nice to them and Danny said “Your mom doesn’t want us here and we don’t want to be here if she doesn’t want us.” I got after mom and asked her what we were going to do with her – did she want to go to a nursing home? She got upset and said “You hadn’t ever better put me there.” I said “Well, what are we going to do then?” She was better to Danny & Shanna after that and before long when I would come over, I would see her sitting on the couch with Breanna on one side of her and Tanner on the other, and she would be reading them a story. Other times I would see her playing catch with them. She would sit on the couch and they would stand a short way away and she would throw them a yarn ball (she made several of these) and they were all having fun. One day she said: “Mae, when Danny graduated, they will want to move and buy their own home and then what will I do?” I told Danny and Shanna and they said “We won’t leave her.” They knew she wouldn’t live long as Mom’s doctor told her that she only had six months to live if she wouldn’t have a heart operation. She had told me that they said she would have to lie on her back for several days after the heart operation and her back was so bad that she didn’t think she could stand to do that as the pain would be too bad. I told her I agreed with her and didn’t think she could do it either. Mom passed away before Danny graduated. I know the Lord had a hand in that also.*

**SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES WITH MOM, PRIOR TO HER DEATH AND AFTERWARDS**

**On May 22,1999,** I had a hard, yet wonderful experience that I really felt Heavenly Father’s presence and guidance - at least I realize now that he was at the “Helm” - he knew what was best. My mother, Mildred Porter, had had a bad week. She was so weak, it was hard for her to breath even with her oxygen, her stomach & back hurt and she felt awful. She didn’t know what was happening, whether she had the flu or whether it was just her health problems. I took her into the doctor the week before as she had a spot on her cheek which wouldn’t heal. It was pre-cancer and Dr. Erickson froze it off. She also told him how her stomach had been hurting and he told her it was because of her osteoporosis, she told him that she wondered if she had a Blatter infection as it hurt when she urinated. He had her give him a urine sample to be tested. I wasn’t very impressed with him as he sure isn’t very compassionate with old people, I have never liked him since I saw how he treated dad that way. Dad was not a complainer, but even when he needed to go to the doctor, Dr. Ericksen acted like “Well, you’re an old man, go home and die.” Mom didn’t get much better; she was so weak that she didn’t take her lasics for two days. (This makes her urinate frequently to get rid of the fluid around her heart and lungs). I told her I would come Thursday night and spend the night with her. I probably should have Wednesday night, but I felt like I needed to help Ken get things ready to go to Idaho as he was taking two days off to go and help David put in his sprinkling system. And Jeff was home and I needed to fix his lunch and make his breakfast the next morning as he leaves so early for work. I guess he could have made out OK, but I wanted to be home to say goodbye to Ken and be there with Jeff and I had other things I needed to do. I stopped at the book store to pick up 2 books for Mom. They are of Sister Hinckley’s life and are excellent books. She had me stop the week before as she wanted to give Georgia and I the books, now she wanted them for her daughters-in-law. I also stopped at Lincoln Elementary to visit with Bonnie Olsen and Suzanne Moon who were retiring and JoAnn Spencer who was going to another school. They were teacher friends of mine while I was the head secretary at Lincoln Elementary.

When I got there, I could tell Mom was very weak so I got her some supper and then I weeded in her flower garden as she had wanted me to do that. I got her to bed about 10:00 and went to bed myself. I got up once to take her to the bathroom. I was late getting to work because I felt I needed to be there to get Mom up and dressed and get her some breakfast. Shanna & Danny are living in the basement. It helps them financially because he has been going to school, just now graduated and is looking for a teaching position. Shanna does mom’s laundry, gives her meals as she cooks her families meals, takes her to the doctor sometimes, etc., but we still help out a lot. Their little son, Tanner, doesn’t sleep well so Shanna doesn’t get up until around 9:00 or 10:00 and mom doesn’t sleep well, but still is ready to get up about 8:00, so that is a problem for Mom. Anyway, I got to work around 9:00. I stopped and bought a few groceries and a pizza for Jeff & I and potato salad for Mom and took Mom some leftover casserole. I finally got her settled sometime after 11:00 p.m. I had just gotten to sleep when the phone rang. It was the Layton City Police asking if we owned a 91 Mercury which was registered to Glendon and Mildred Porter. I said “yes”. She asked if I knew where it was. I was surprised at that, but I went in and asked Mom. She was concerned about the late phone call, hadn’t gone to sleep. She said Bryce had it at his home. I told the dispatch and she asked what that address was. When I told her, she said the car was found at Valley View Dr. in Layton and the officer had wondered if it was a stolen car. She asked if I would call Bryce to see if it was there. I hated to wake them at that time of night, but decided I’d better do it. Deanna woke up and was startled and a little confused but finally said that Chad & Darin had taken it as they were hiking and camping. That solved the mystery so we all went back to bed. I couldn’t go to sleep for a while, but slept until 6:00 a.m. when Mom called me. I went in and she had had an accident about 4:00 a.m. She didn’t want to wake me that early so laid in it for two hours as she was so weak she couldn’t take care of it herself. I felt bad that she had lain there like that. I told her that was why I was over there, I was there to help her. After I cleaned her up, she said she felt she needed to go to the hospital and asked me to call Deanna as Deanna had been through this with her mother and Uncle Franz. Mom said she had not slept at all and her chest and back were hurting and she felt so weak and so lousy. I called Deanna and she came down. We thought that we might need to put Mom in a rest home since she was so weak and couldn’t take care of herself, and we didn’t know how we could take care of her around the clock. I work, Georgia has a preschool, Bryce goes to work way out west of the Great Salt Lake and has to stay 3 to 4 days at a time, Kim lives up in Morgan and wouldn’t be able to help much as he has a young family, is the scoutmaster in his ward and is an insurance agent for Beneficial Insurance and needs to work many nights. And, of course, Terry can’t help much with living up in Alaska. I talked to Terry and he felt bad, but I told him not to - but to pray as he has a lot of faith. Pray that whatever is best for mom and for us will happen. We called one of the rest homes in Clearfield. They said a person has to be in the hospital for 3 days or Medicare won’t pay for anything.

We ended up calling 911 for an ambulance since Mom was too weak to even get to the car for me to drive her to the hospital. I rode in the ambulance with her. When we got there, they hooked her up to machines, took many tests and got her on medication. She hadn’t been taking her lasic as she felt too weak to make it to the bathroom. They said that was the problem and the nurse chewed mom out, saying that she had to take it no matter what - as the fluids build up around the heart and it pushes it into the lungs, etc. Georgia was sick so couldn’t come, but Rick came. Kim was on a scout trip, but Jeanenne called up there and he came home and the two of them came to the hospital. This was a Saturday and Ken was still up at David’s helping him with his sprinkling system. We were at the hospital all morning. Mom’s heart had been filtrating (racing) and she had lots of fluid around her heart making it hard for her to breathe and making her feel lousy and weak. They got her on high doses of Lasic and put her on medication to slow her heart down. Between the nurse and I, we kept putting the bedpan under mom and emptying it. They took her vitals and she was doing much better - so they said we could take her home. She ate some lunch there as she was so weak. They helped her into a wheelchair and took her out to Deanna’s car and we took her home. I had been concerned when they said she could come home since she was so bad, but the insurances don’t want to pay for them to be in the hospital - so they won’t admit them. Dr. Erickson was out of town again, so we couldn’t talk to him to have him admit her, so I had to talk to a doctor who was on call for the hospital. He told me that since they had her stabilized, she could go home. I asked the nurse how we were going to get her up the stairs into her home since she was so weak and we had to call the ambulance before. She said if Mom couldn’t make it, we could call an ambulance again to talk her into her home. I was disgusted. Anyway, Kim followed us and he and Danny helped her up the stairs and she was able to do it, but she was exhausted. Kim and Jeanenne told me to go home and get some rest - that they could stay with her that day and I wouldn’t need to come back until 9:00 or even 10:00 p.m. I was thankful for that so I made sure Mom was resting well and told her I would be back that night to spend the night with her. When I got home, my neighbor, Bonnie Benedict, came over and asked how Mom was. I talked to her for a while, then came in and made phone calls to Mom’s brothers and sister - letting them know of Mom’s condition. I called for a substitute for my primary class and took the books over. I tried to rest for a few minutes, but couldn’t sleep so I got up and straightened up the house and did some laundry. Ken & Jeff got home and I told them the situation. Ken took me over to Mom’s and stayed for a while then went home. I asked him to bring a roast, potatoes, etc., and I would fix dinner at Mom’s for everyone including Scott & Michelle as it was their week to be with us. I enjoyed being with Mom and she did feel some better. We watched the BYU Devotionals, the Tabernacle Choir broadcast, etc. I fixed Mom some breakfast and took it to her as she ate in her chair in the front room. While we were eating supper with the family, the priesthood came with the Sacrament for her and she called me in to partake of it with her. Since she was feeling some better now and Danny & Shanna were there, I felt I needed to go home as I needed to go to work the next day. I did hate to leave Mom and I knew she hated to have me go, but she knew I needed to. Georgia was still sick or she would have been over.

Mom got along all right and she did take her Lasic faithfully**. I talked to Deanna and she told me that she felt Dad’s presence there with Mom on Saturday morning when we were getting her ready to go to the hospital and that she heard him saying as he nudged her on the arm “Let’s go, Mom, let’s go” (He called her Mom when they were in the presence of their children) That week when I was with Mom, I told her what Deanna had said and she said “I know, Mae, I felt him there too and heard him say that, but I told him I would be coming soon, but I wasn’t ready yet.”**

Mom loved her family and didn’t want to leave us. She had told me many times that she wanted to be here when all of her missionary grandsons came home from their missions. She had five all out at the same time - Jeff (our youngest son), Chad (Bryce & Deanna’s son), Brannon & David (Terry & Angela’s sons) and Brady (Georgia & Rick’s son). Jeff came home in February and Chad in April, but the other three are still out. I had told her that she would never want to leave as there would always be some grandchild getting married, having a baby, going on a mission, etc., and that was true and she loved being here with her family. She loved each one of us and we are thankful for her love. She was so good to write faithfully to each of her missionary grandsons and to keep in touch with all of her grandchildren. Cindi, Hal’s daughter, is in Colorado and Mom worried a lot about her as she has been on drugs and in and out of rehabs. Cindi’s daughter, Samantha, gives her a purpose for life now. Jean, her mother, died about a year and a half ago and is buried up in Morgan by Hal.

Mom’s brothers & sister were all very concerned about Mom so they called her and Uncle June came down to see her. Uncle Van had wanted her to go with him and Aunt Allison back to Arkansas to visit Uncle Dean and Aunt Stella. In fact, she had already purchased her ticket. This was in May. But, she felt she didn’t feel well enough to go - so she didn’t. We are glad she didn’t as I am sure it would have been too hard on her and she probably wouldn’t have made it back home to us. Both Uncle June and Aunt Joy wanted Mom to come stay with them again. She had gone to visit Uncle June last Fall and they all had such a good time that they wanted her to come again. She has gone to Aunt Joy’s several times and they always have a wonderful time and Jack loves having her there also. Mom is a wonderful person and fun to be around. Anyway, they all called her and she was little upset with me for calling them, but I felt they should know as they love her a lot.

The following Thursday night when I went over to Mom’s, I took flowers to plant as she loves flowers and has a big flower garden in front of her home. I weeded and then planted the flowers for her. She sat in her chair on the porch watching me and visiting with me. Terry’s daughter, Melia, came over to visit with her also. She wasn’t able to stay very long, however. I got a little upset with Mom again as I had been weeding and planting the flowers and I was tired from working all day, and she kept having me do other things in her garden.

The next week, I came on a Wednesday as Ken & I were leaving Thursday right after work to go on a little anniversary trip as it was our 40th anniversary. I asked Mom if she would like to get out and go for a ride and she said she would.

She got tired being cooped up in her house all the time, so Georgia and I tried to take her places when we could. Ken & I had taken her with us on Memorial Day. Actually, it was Sunday, the day before Memorial Day. I fixed a picnic lunch and we went to the Morgan Park and ate in their bowery. We took Mom’s wheelchair and she sat in it at the table. The weather was perfect and Ken, Mom & I really enjoyed being there. Jeff came later with Georgia as he wasn’t home when we were ready to leave and we thought he wanted to come up on his motorcycle, but when Georgia called to see if we had left and he answered, he told her that we had left him. I felt bad about that, but Ken was anxious to go. He had gone over to Mom’s to get her and picked her flowers to take up and wanted to leave. So, Georgia told Jeff to come over and ride up with them - which he did. After supper, we drove over to the cemetery where we soon met Kim & part of his family and Georgia and her family. Bryce had to work so he and Deanna had come up on Friday. We put the flowers on all the graves and they looked beautiful. Mom was happy with them. We enjoyed visiting, but it soon became cold and windy. We wrapped a blanket around Mom, but soon decided we had better leave. Kim wanted us to come over to his house and play games, but it was getting late - so we headed for home. Mom has mentioned many times how she enjoyed that good picnic at the park and going to the cemetery.

Well, back to Wednesday, June 16th. I drove all around Clinton and showed Mom where Ken is working on the Clinton Town Center. She enjoyed the ride and we drove around in Syracuse and West Point. Then she asked if we could go to the Arctic Circle and she would buy us a root beer float as they had them on sale for 99 cents. I knew she had brought her purse. We did and enjoyed sitting them visiting and watching the people come and go and the employees in the Arctic Circle making the food and helping the customers. I started the car when we had finished with the floats, but she said “could we stay a little longer, I’m enjoying watching the people and just relaxing here.” I said “Sure, Mom, we can stay as long as you like.” She finally said we could go. I took her home and as I left to go to my home, I glanced up at her front room window and she was there waving goodbye to me as she always did (unless she was too sick to do so - and she had to be really bad not to do it). That was the last time I saw Mom in good health.

Ken and I went on our anniversary trip the next afternoon. We stayed at the Air Port Hilton. I had always liked that hotel as it has a big man-made lake in front of it with a beautiful fountain. It has a sidewalk all around it and I would see people walking around it and thought how fun it would be to stay there. It was wonderful. The room was really nice also. Ken and I did walk around it that evening, fed the ducks and just relaxed. On Friday, we slept in, went out for breakfast and then went to the Salt Lake Temple. We were asked to be witnesses, so that was special. We had lunch in the temple afterwards and that evening we went to see the play “Seven Brides for Seven Brothers” at the Hale Theater. It was really good. We had seen the movie, but enjoyed the play also. We swam both in the inside and outside pools before going to bed. Saturday morning, we slept in again (sure seemed good to not have to set an alarm and get up at 4:45 a.m.) We packed up and went to the Joseph Smith Memorial where we met with the Burgesses on the top floor for the wedding breakfast for their son, Bryan and his wife. It was really nice and we enjoyed seeing Allen & Jeanie’s other children. We went to the car which was parked in the J.S.M. parking lot, got our casual clothes, went back in and changed our clothes in the restroom. We then went to the zoo where we spent the afternoon. We really enjoyed being together. Ken was really sweet to me and bought me ice cream and cotton candy even though he can’t have any himself because of his health. We left for home about 7:00 p.m. We decided to stop at the grocery store to buy our groceries before going home.

**MOM’S DEATH & FUNERAL**

**When we got home, there was a urgent message from Georgia saying Mom was really bad**. I called, grabbed my nightgown and what I needed to spent the night and Ken and I drove over. Mom had felt good that morning, but when Shanna helped her into the bathroom, Mom complained a little about her left foot saying it felt numb and tingling. By the time she got back to the couch it was hurting. It wasn’t long until she was in terrible pain and Shanna called her Mom to come down. Deanna had errands to run, but realized that both Georgia and I were out of town so she came down. They gave Mom some morphine and then called the Hospice nurse. The nurse came right away and they kept administering morphine, but it didn’t seem to help much. Mom was in such pain for over 6 hours, they said. She told them that having babies wasn’t anything compared to this pain. What had happened was a blood clot had gone to her foot and cut off the circulation. I didn’t realize how painful it is when the blood is not circulating blood. The nurse told Deanna and the others that it is terrible pain and that Mom’s foot and leg would turn black and the skin would start to sluff off. The leg would die and eventually have to be amputated. Just before I got there, **Mom had said “Please, I’ll do anything, just get me out of this pain”.**  Soon after that she relaxed as they had given her enough morphine to stop the severe pain. They had called the hospice pharmacist to come so they could insert a tube into Mom’s stomach allowing a constant drip of morphine so Mom wouldn’t have to be in that terrible pain again. They had also put a catheter into Mom. Mom was pretty much out of it when I got there. I helped the nurse put a nightgown on Mom and I just had to pull her arms through the nightgown as she couldn’t help herself. I don’t even know if she knew I was there or not. I was glad I didn’t have to see Mom in such terrible pain, but I was disappointed that I wasn’t there to be with her and help her. Kim and Jeanenne and Shanna were there, and when Georgia got home, she went right over. I’m not sure what time she got there. Bryce also came from work**. Bryce, Georgia and I decided we all wanted to be there with Mom and spend the night.** Kim & Jeanenne had gone home after Georgia got there. The nurse left a brochure with us telling us the last stages before death. **I woke up once to go to the bathroom and noticed that Mom had not stirred as she was in the same position. She was still breathing so I went back to bed. At 6:00 a.m. I woke and went in and sat in Mom’s rocking chair by her bed. She was still in the same position and I noticed on the catheter bag that no more body fluids had been going in as it was the same level as last night. I knew that was one of the last signs. I also noticed that her fingernails were going dark and also around her eyes. That was also one of the signs. I looked at her leg and it was going quite black and it upset me and I said a quick prayer that Mom wouldn’t have to deal with that. I hated to have her leave us, but I also hated to have her stay and suffer more and I knew it would be very hard on her if she had to have her leg amputated. We had heard how hard it was on Aunt Stella and how the pain was so intense. Mom had been through enough on Saturday, I didn’t want her to have to have more. I sat there for some time talking to Mom and just thinking about her and life. I got a washcloth and washed her face and hands as they were clammy**. Bryce and Georgia got up and they knew Mom was dying also. I called the nurse at Hospice to be reassured that these signs were normal and that there was nothing any of us needed to do for her. The nurse said she was glad I called and she wanted us to feel free to call at any time. She did say that those were some of the last signs and she didn’t expect Mom to last much longer. She asked if we would like to have an aid come and give Mom a sponge bath - which might make her more comfortable. I said we would. We called our families and the ones who lived close by came over and were able to say their last goodbyes to their grandmother. She couldn’t speak to them, but I’m sure she heard them and us.

Aunt Beth had called and said her and Eve wanted to bring dinner over to us. That was very sweet of them and we appreciated it. She brought roast, potatoes and gravy, vegetable, rolls, salad and dessert. She is such a wonderful and thoughtful aunt. We all love her and Uncle Verle very much. The food tasted so good.

Julie, the aid, came about 3:50 p.m. and gave Mom a sponge bath. She was very sweet, tender and caring with Mom. As she was finishing, she made the comment that many of her patients, at this stage, had passed away during or right after the sponge bath as they were relaxed and more comfortable. It was right after that, about 4:30, that we (her children and some of the grandchildren) were gathered around Mom, and Bryce had gone over to give her a kiss on the forehead. He asked Julie to come over and check Mom. She did and said **Mom had passed away.** We all quietly cried and comforted each other, but were relieved that Mom didn’t have to suffer any longer and she went in her sleep and didn’t seem to have any pain as she left this world. We had felt the presence of dad and I know he was anxious to have her with him again. It has been six years since he passed away and I know he has missed her terribly as they were SWEETHEARTS. They have both been such wonderful examples to me and my children and all their family**. I love them both so very much and will eternally be grateful to them for their love, teachings, example and all they have done for me and my family.**

We started making phone calls. Georgia had brought her cell phone and I used Mom’s phone. We called her brothers and sister, Dad’s brothers and sisters, her close friends, her Bishop, the mortician and others. That took the rest of the afternoon and evening. Uncle Dale and Aunt Esther came over, Uncle June and his wife, the Bishop to help us with the funeral arrangements. I told him I would get all the information and get it over to him the next day. I took the week off work. Mom wanted all her children to speak if we felt we could, so I put us down on the program. She wanted special songs - “How Great Thou Art” and we asked her secret granddaughter, Becky Weaver and her sister, Stephanie, to sing it as they have beautiful voices and Mom loved them, especially Becky. Mom loved that song and also “I Need Thee Every Hour” - so all of us children and our spouses sang it and Bryce and Deanna’s daughter, Shanna, accompanied us. The grandchildren and great grandchildren sang the first number and it was “Families Can Be Together Forever”.

I made the phone calls, typed up the program for the Bishop and mortuary and then took it to them.

**It was an emotional time, but also a wonderful time.** Terry came down on Monday and stayed at Mom’s home all week. Shanna said it really helped her to have him there as she really missed her grandmother. She lived there in the house and did a lot for Mom. We enjoyed having Terry down and his daughter, Melia, who is down here living with Georgia, really loved having her dad here. She was with him all the time except when she had to go to work. Terry is such a cute guy. He is a sweet, thoughtful, good man and brother. He has been either in the bishopric in his ward or in the High Council in his stake most of the time he has lived in Alaska. He is very spiritual and realizes the value of serving the Lord and his fellow man.

Bryce, Terry, Georgia, Kim and I enjoyed being together as we planned the funeral and went through some of Mom’s things. We probably wouldn’t have been going through her things this soon, but we felt we needed to since Terry would only be here for a week.

We all met with the mortician to go over things with him and write up the obituary, etc. Mom & Dad had already paid for their funeral plan which made it easy for us. They had picked out their caskets and everything. The only thing we needed for Mom was her temple clothes. The mortician was a good friend of Mom & Dads and he and his father had taken care of Mom’s parents and also grandma Porter. He thought a lot of them as they did him - so he wanted to have us pick out a beautiful dress for Mom and he wanted the dress, shoes and all of the temple clothes to be a gift to her from him. That was so special and Mom did look so beautiful. Mom’s beautician, Donna Jensen in Sunset, loved Mom and the last few months, she would come to Mom’s house each week to do her hair. It was too hard for Mom to go down Donna’s steps to her basement where she had her salon, so she came to Mom. We knew Mom would like Donna to do her hair for the funeral - so I asked her. She cried and then said “yes, it would be an honor to do it for Mildred”. So, with the beautiful clothes and her hair so pretty, she looked very beautiful. Georgia and I had gone to Ogden to pick out the flowers - the casket piece from us children and a beautiful arrangement from the children and grandchildren. Georgia and I decided to pay for them out of the money in Mom’s account - since I was a co-signer with Mom and the money would now be all of ours anyway. Most of our children are struggling financially so we decided to pay for theirs also.

Mom’s brothers and sister, especially Aunt Joy and also Uncle June really had a hard time when we called to let them know Mom had died. **Mom loved her brothers and sister very much**. After dad died, her and Uncle June became very close as they would call each other every night. **Uncle June** had lost his wife to cancer so they were both lonely and turned to each other for support. Mom spent time with Uncle June and Benita up in Wyoming last year and loved it so much. In fact, Uncle June was planning to come last Tuesday to take her up for another visit. Mom loved to have **Uncle Van** stop in and visit when he would be up this way for National Guard or other meetings and they kept in touch through phone calls and letters, also her other brother, **Uncle Dean**, in Arkansas. Mom only had one sister and the two of them were very close. She loved to go to **Aunt Joys** in St George and stay with her and Jack. They called her **“mims**” and they loved their visits together and they always had high phone bills, when they weren’t together, because of the time they spent on the phone. They will really miss her, and we, her family, will really miss her. She was a wonderful mother and great example to each of us.

We talked about calling Cindi (Hal’s daughter) and offering to pay for her flight out as we knew she would want to be here and we know Mom would want her here. She was glad we did offer as she did want to come, but she didn’t have the money. She got a friend to take care of Samantha.

**We did fly Cindi out, but it was a bad experience for all of us**. Cindi couldn’t handle having the last “family link” gone - whom she had loved and had been loved by. We are certain that she took drugs to kill the pain, because she was so hyper and always wanted to borrow Georgia & Rick’s car (she was staying with them), she even got in a minor wreck with it which, of course, upset Georgia & Rick and the rest of us. She made Malia late for the viewing which upset Terry & Malia. Georgia couldn’t relax because the way Cindi was acting. Cindi took Malia with her to Mom’s house and began going through things and wanted Mom’s rings and most valuable jewelry. Malia told her she shouldn’t take anything. Georgia took them away from Cindi and that upset Georgia more. It put a damper on the funeral, especially for Georgia. Kim offered to take Cindi to his home until she left to go back to Colorado, but she did the same thing there, which was upsetting for Kim & Jeanenne. I can understand Cindi turning to drugs at this time, but it was hard for everyone involved and we were all relieved to see her go back. Georgia called John, Cindi’s boyfriend, to tell him what happened and to have him meet Cindi at the airport. He was upset because she has done this before. He loves Cindi, but can’t trust her - so won’t marry her. We can’t blame him, but wish she could stay off them and prove to be trustworthy so he would marry her and she could have a somewhat normal life for her and Samantha.

Mom was loved by everyone as she loved all of them - so we had a steady line at the viewing on Wednesday evening, June 23rd (dad’s birthday). The flowers were beautiful. It was good to see all our relatives and friends and Mom’s friends, neighbors and ward members.

**I marveled at how much love I felt during this time. I know the Holy Ghost was with us to comfort us and help us. I just wish I could feel that spirit and love all the time, but was sure grateful for it then. I didn’t have much time to write my talk because of all the things I needed to do and calls I needed to make, but my Heavenly Father surely blessed me. When I finally sat down at the computer for a few minutes to gather my thoughts for my talk, the words just came to my mind. I had been praying about it. Ken had told me different things I should say, but those were not the words which came to my mind - so I felt the Lord was guiding me and I felt really good about it. I wasn’t nervous even when I got up to give the talk. Bryce, Terry, Georgia and Kim all gave wonderful talks and I was very proud of all of them.**