



## Velda G Shallenberger

March 23, 1934 - January 21, 2021

Velda Gail Shallenberger, nicknamed “Muggie” as a child and “Booger” to her grandchildren, passed into the arms of Jesus on January 21, 2021, with her daughters Vicky McNamara and Jill Kaleohano by her side. Velda was born to Harry and Ruth Rhoades in Topeka, Kansas February 23, 1934. She had a sister, Wanda, five years older, and a brother, Wayne, three years younger. As a child she lived in Silver City, NM. Later, she moved to Soap Lake and graduated in 1951 from Ephrata High School. Velda met Ben Shallenberger (deceased) in Soap Lake and they married November 28, 1952. They lived in California with their two daughters until they settled in Ephrata in 1961.

Though her employment at the Grant County Sheriff office is notable, her accomplishments in her career at The Bureau of Reclamation (in both the Safety and Lands Divisions) produced a National Safety award in water safety. Velda started a program in Grant County that encouraged children to learn how to swim, promoted safety around irrigation canals, and created the ‘Otto the Otter for Safe Water’ mascot. She was chosen to represent the Bureau of Reclamation in 1984 at the World’s Fair in New Orleans. Velda was a colorful masterpiece of a woman-child. She was a deep thinker and curious about life, able to talk quantum physics and scientific theories. She also loved to study and learn new things. Velda loved to pull a quick-witted rhyme out of thin air and she never missed a beat or an opportunity for a smutty and silly jest. Ever-resourceful, there wasn’t a project that she felt she couldn’t tackle — she could improvise for almost anything. Velda was a writer of short stories and

poetry, and, of course, her autobiography Call Me Muggie. She was an accomplished oil painter, skilled seamstress, and animated actress. She delighted to take in the world, and traveled to Europe twice with her daughters. Velda loved gardening, especially caring for her beautiful roses. Some of Velda's greatest joy came from being with her family. She was a wonderful friend and compassionate listener, and had a significant relationship with each and every person in her life. Positive and encouraging, she was ever for the underdog. The worn, mile-long prayer list by her bedside was evidence of a devoted prayer warrior with faith and trust in Jesus. Her children and grandchildren found themselves on her doorstep when in need of prayer and a sure answer. Velda is survived by her two daughters, Vicky McNamara (Kelly Field, Ephrata) and Jill Kaleohano (Alton Kaleohano, Kailua-Kona). She is additionally survived by her 7 grandchildren: Jennifer Clark (Jason Clark), Caleb McNamara (Tammy Canfield), Sam Kaleohano (Jen Kaleohano), Makela Otis (Brook Otis), Tessa Dukes (Clay Dukes), Andrew Kaleohano, and Maile Wang (Micah Wang). She had 13 great-grandchildren: Teighan, McKaidan, Titan, Kai, Quinn, Sawyer, Rhys, Kepa, Evangeline, Norah, Benjamin, Kawai, and Gray. She was loved by her bonus family as well: Whitney Field and Ali Mantese (Antonio Mantese, and their children Tavone and Giada).

Please express your thoughts and memories at [www.nicolesfuneralhome.com](http://www.nicolesfuneralhome.com). Arrangements are under the care of Nicoles Funeral Home of Ephrata.

# Cemetery Details

## Valley View Memorial Park

20174 Rd A N.E.  
Soap Lake, WA 98851  
(509) 754-4150  
[bea.white@nicolesfuneralhome.com](mailto:bea.white@nicolesfuneralhome.com)

# Tribute Wall



“ I loved hearing how Velda told about her week and what Jesus had done for her. And she would ask really wonderful questions. I will miss her until I can see her again. I was hoping to go to her house one day and see this art work that we had talked about but COVID hit. I will never forget how sweet she was.

**Arlene Lawhead-Ulrich** - February 01, 2021 at 02:04 AM

CF

“ I worked with Velda for over 20 years. She was always cheerful and kind, and I enjoyed her company so much. She was also very funny and shared hilarious stories about her life with us. Every time I think of those funny stories I will remember Velda. I know she will be missed greatly by her friends and family.

*Cindy and Doug Fritsch*

**Cindy Fritsch** - January 29, 2021 at 01:37 PM

HJ

“ I remember that Velda loved to dance. She will be remembered for her amazing poetic talents. For any occasion, and especially retirements at the Bureau, she would often times write a fitting and hilarious poem to honor the retiree. I'm sure there's a big gathering of Bureau-crats going on somewhere up there . . . like they didn't miss a beat since their last celebration. I'm sure Velda's memory will be cherished by her family and so many others.

*Sincerely, Helen Jeske*



**Helen Jeske** - January 28, 2021 at 02:22 AM

LK

“ So sorry to hear of Velda's passing, what a sweet lady she was always smiling when she came into the office. we had no idea of all the accomplishments she had in her life.  
we shall miss renewing her "booger" license plates.

*fondly, Lori, Diane and Yaneht  
the licensing ladies*

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**Lori Kinzel** - January 27, 2021 at 12:38 PM

RS

“ I only knew Mrs. Shallenberger when I was young. She was so friendly to the kids in the neighborhood. One thing I remember was her reaction when the black lab (Joe?) was painted with a white stripe down his back to resemble a large skunk. She was perturbed, but laughing too. I see by the obituary that she was well loved.

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**Richard Spence** - January 26, 2021 at 09:50 AM