

Edythe Falck. Some people knew her as “mom,” “aunt” or “great – grandma Falck.” I knew her as Grandma. For everyone who knew her, she was a wonderful, beautiful, and caring woman. To say that Grandma was dearly loved is a definite understatement. I’d like to tell you all a little bit about my Grandma.

Grandma had a great sense of humor, and a quick wit. For example, I remember back a few years ago, as the plans came together for her to live with my parents - Grandma confided in me that she needed my help; she explained in a hushed tone that my parents’ plans were to apparently move her into their backyard shed. She pretended to be upset. Knowing Grandma, I knew of course, that she was joking. This was partly because the shed was too small for anyone to live in, and also, if the plans were real, Grandma would not have complained. Grandma was not a complainer. Instead, she radiated positivity and happiness.

While I was a teenager, though, she often warned me that if I wasn’t careful, or wasn’t nice to her, she would someday sing at my wedding. Grandma said she had a lovely voice that everyone would want to listen to at my wedding – and of course Grandma did have a wonderful voice -but it was never anything she actually bragged about, and she definitely never took herself too serious. In a day and age when humility is not the norm, Grandma stood out. We need more people like her in this world.

Grandma was also loving and patient. If you spoke with some of her grandchildren, they’d probably tell you about Grandma flying all the way to Hong Kong to see them while they lived there – back when flying to Asia from the U.S. was not very common. Grandma always made it a point to send Birthday cards, Christmas cards, Easter Cards, and various other cards to the grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Even though she became legally blind in her latter years, she always somehow managed to write “I love you” inside each card. In recent years, if you wanted to find Grandma, it was quite easy. You’d simply need to ask where the nearest tea-party was, and she’d be there, sipping pretend tea and eating pretend cookies with her grandchildren or great grand children, and maybe even some dolls. Grandma was perfectly content doing pretty much anything when it involved children. For example, when my daughter was 3, she was enamored with Grandma, usually begging to sit on Grandma’s lap – and not just for a moment but literally for hours on end. Sometimes she’d sit with Grandma the entire day. And Grandma loved it. Grandma also enjoyed telling the story about me as a 2 year old taking a four hour nap in her arms, while she rocked in her rocking chair. I also remember when my sister Candis, and cousin Kawan were young, the two of them using grandma as their beauty salon model. They made Grandma up - complete with lipstick, blush, eye shadow, and most importantly – the black penciled in eyebrows - which contrasted so nicely with grandma’s white hair.

Grandma also loved baseball, and the Minnesota Twins. In 1987 we waved our homer hankies at the Metrodome celebrating the World Series Champions. In recent years, Grandma devoted many of her summertime evenings to watching and listening to the Twins. For a guy, it was so much fun talking baseball with my grandma. Last summer I,

along with my parents, sister, wife, and kids went to a final Twins game with Grandma. It was a great time, cheering on the Twins as grandma watched through her binoculars.

A trip to Grandma's was never complete without a visit to her kitchen. From a child's perspective, Grandma's home was magical. She seemed to possess a never ending supply of cookies and treats. Grandma had an orange Tupperware container that sat next to the refrigerator, and it was, without fail, always filled with cookies. No matter how many cookies I ate, the next time I came to visit her it was once again filled to the brim. I also loved the rolls Grandma made. The buttered toast Grandma made. And who could ever forget all fancy containers throughout her home filled with hard candies. The watermelon ones were my favorite.

Another thing that stands out to me is how much Grandma loved Grandpa. I remember back when Grandpa was alive, the two of them traveling together in their motor home. Some of the grandchildren had the opportunity to travel with her and Grandpa, which was really special. After Grandpa passed away, Grandma's love for him was evidenced in sometimes subtle ways; - the photo of Grandpa that sat next to her chair; the stories she'd tell of him; the way she'd suddenly get quiet during our weekly Thursday evening phone calls and say how much she missed him. Other things gave away in not so subtle ways, how much Grandma loved him and missed him; it seemed like each year, around the anniversary of Grandpa's death, Grandma would in her words "feel crummy" followed by a trip to the hospital for what often turned out to be heart issues. She definitely suffered from a broken heart, and missed Grandpa dearly.

Grandma was generous. If she happened to hear of someone in need, she never hesitated to extend her hand and help. Grandma told me that her mom once told her that God placed every one of us on earth with a mission - the mission of helping others. Ever since that day, when asked what my favorite quote is - I've quoted Grandma.

And my Grandma was a great conversationalist. She enjoyed talking. That's probably one of the reasons why she had a dozen or so phones in her home, as well as intercoms. And when it came to the stories she'd tell, her memory was astounding. For example, while a normal person usually has a hard time remembering what they ate for breakfast - Grandma, when telling a story that took place 60 or 70 years ago, could recall what a gallon of milk cost at that time; what the going rate for babysitting was; and maybe even the name of the neighbor's pet bird. I loved talking with Grandma.

Grandma's faith in Jesus Christ was strong. Nothing could shake her faith, or her love for God. Despite all her physical ailments in her latter years, her faith only strengthened. She seemed to tie so many conversations in with the Bible, or with one of her favorite hymns.

A few weeks ago, it was apparent that she was approaching the end of her life. For the first time in my life, I'd sit with Grandma, and she didn't have the strength to talk. She, for the most part, lay in her bed, and slept. I was blessed though, to hear her tell me a few final words that grabbed a hold of me. Grandma told me something that I think we all knew about her. She said, "Nathan, I've had an amazing life. I've had a great life."

And then she exclaimed; “And I am SO EXCITED, and so ready, to go to Heaven and see my family. I’m so excited.” You see, even while lying there facing the end of her life, Grandma was excited for the next chapter. She didn’t complain. Instead she had hope, excitement, and a real, genuine peace. And while it impressed me, it by no means surprised me.

That’s just the kind of Grandma she was.

Nathan Erickson, grandson