

Journey Through Lauretta's Life

By: Andrea Wickman

I would like to thank my mom for letting me stay up late to work on this project, helping me make my tri-fold, and making grandma's favorite recipe. My dad for helping me find out more about grandma. Alivia Oley, Savvy Sweat, Hailey Briggs, and Hailey Urbane for pre-editing my paper before the final draft. Also grandpa Al for being a great husband for as long as you were alive. We miss you grandpa, rest in peace. Lastly my grandma, for letting me know more about your life. For her to know that I'm interested and always will be. Thank you grandma, I love you.

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Birth

Lauretta Neuman was born on November 18, 1933 at 2:30 in the afternoon. Her parents were Harvard and Viola Neuman. She was born in a farmhouse¹ by the doctor called C.E. Zellmer. Back then they didn't have many hospitals and if they did it would be really expensive, so most likely kids were born in their houses or barns. The farmhouse belonged to her great grandparents named John and Joanna Fisher. Her grandparent also lived there on the farmhouse. A year later she was baptized March 9, 1934.

Childhood

During Laurie's childhood, it was a bit crowded. Everyone had to share a room, or very small rooms inside the house. When she got a little older, she got her own room. Inside this room was a small single sized bed. On the bed had a green hand sewed bedspread with a skirt around the side. Viola, her mother, made the bed spread for her. Also in her room was a dresser with a mirror on top of it and a small stool to sit by it.

When Laurie was 3 years old her mother used to dress her for school or just everyday activities. For some reason Laurie always thought she wore a dress because whenever she looked at a picture of herself she always had a dress on. In the winter she wore stockings² with her dresses, usually they were brown or white.

In about 1st grade Laurie remembers that during winter time she didn't want to go to school because her brother was in the hospital. So she said her "goodbyes" to her parents and went to hide behind the shed in her backyard. Soon she got cold and saw her father go outside to do his chores, but he also spotted her. Then her father brought Laurie inside to tell her mother. Later after they discussed her punishment and Lauries

¹ Farmhouse: A house on a farm, most likely a barn or inside the house. They had a lot of these back in the day. The farmhouses keep farm animals in them.

² Stockings: They are long pants, usually under a dress. The stockings were a big hit back then and some people still use the big wool ones in the winter.

mother brought her all the way to school so then she got embarrassed and her teacher was disappointed on why she was late.

Laurie's family was very close with each other, they barely fought with each other, they wanted to keep their family together no matter what happens. Her father worked on construction so he moved a lot. Her mother believed "that if the family sticks together the stronger they'll be". They all moved right along with him.

Their family always bought the usual stuff like groceries and clothes, but the thing that Laurie got occasionally was a soda, or an ice cream cone. Those always costs a nickel but the price kept going up. Laurie's parents would always give her money because she never had an allowance, nor did she know what that was.

In third grade, Laretta had her first boyfriend by the name of jimmy. Jimmy was a very smart person and he had blonde hair. Their relationship ended when Laurie had to move away from Northern Wisconsin.

Teenage Years

When Laurie was also in 8th grade she got confirmed. The day was August 8, 1948. She wore a dress when she was confirmed.

During the younger school grades, they didn't have organized school sports. But she always loved to play sports. She did play volleyball and basketball in high school and she loved doing ice skating.

Laretta moved a lot and did a lot of things. She went to 13 different grade schools³ and 3 different high schools. They moved throughout Iowa, Indiana, Michigan and Wisconsin where she is now. When she was growing up she wanted to be a teacher, then a hair stylist, then she finally realized that she wanted to be a secretary. Her grades were the highest in shorthand⁴, typing classes as well as result. During her

³ Grade School: It is just like what we have but it was called a grade school. The grade school is basically a elementary school.

⁴ Shorthand: A way to write in a very small way. It looks like chicken scratch but it is just english in a very small way.

senior year Laurie was hired to a part time secretary to a three-county Wisconsin State Probation & Parole Officer.

Laurie learned how to drive by going into a police car, driving around the block and he said she passed. They never had driver's Ed back then so that was one way to learn how to drive, or get your driver's licence. When she did learn how to drive, her friend and herself went down to hang out after school, occasionally at the Kandy Kitchen. She would usually get a cherry coke that cost 5 cents.

Adulthood

When Laurie graduated they didn't have a big class. There were only 46 graduates. The ceremony was in the school's gym, but later they had a big dinner in the school's cafeteria. She didn't really set any goals for her future but she did know that she wanted to be a secretary. Later she moved into the big city of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Laurie worked as a secretary for the company called Allis Chalmers and then worked for Wisconsin Electric later on in life.

She attended the college of Milwaukee Technical College, Northern Michigan University (Michigan), and Lansing Community College. She never got or wanted a degree in college but became a secretary.

The first time Laurie got engaged was by a man named Don Wickman. He proposed to her in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The wedding was in Gresham, Wisconsin. It was held in a small country church. The reception was held at a home of her new in-laws. Today, Laurie still has her wedding dress. They went on a honeymoon on a three day trip up to Northern Wisconsin.

The second time she got married was to a person by the name of Al Schmeling. He proposed to Laurie in Olympia, Washington. They were there for vacation. Laurie got married also in Gresham, Wisconsin. They only had family members and close friends with them. Laurie also had a buffet dinner after the wedding in a local restaurant. In this wedding they never went on a honeymoon.

Laurie had her first child in 1956 and she was 22. The child was a girl named Terri. Terri now has a husband named Chuck and a son named Josh. Laurie's second child was named John, he was born in 1960 when she was 26. John is now the father of a set of twins, Andrea and Bradley. John also has a wife named Beverly.

Laurie remembers when Terri was 2 years old they both had to chase down the ice cream man, also known as Popsicle Pete. Terri was just learning to talk and when they stood by the screen door and hear the bell ring, she got really excited and screamed "Basicko Poot".

Laurie also remember when John was just a baby they took him up north to see his cousin. Whenever John looked at his cousin he would burst out laughing. He would never stop not even for a while. Even when the whole family joined in on the laughter he would keep laughing.

When John was 2 years old, there family went on a fishing trip to Canada. He was playing on the beach in swim trunks and he wore his little tin sand pail upside down on his head. They all laughed at the sight and took picture on there 8mm film.⁵

When John was in high school he had a motorcycle accident going to see Andrea's mom for a date to watch star wars. The accident was in a road sign and it was in front of the gas station of where he worked. At the time it was 90 miles away from where Laurie was. He was taken to a local hospital and had to wait until he got there to sign the papers for surgery. He has 2 broken legs and several severe slashes from that road sign. It was one of the longest trips she had to make in her life. If anyone goes down to where he had the accident, the sign is still there, put back a ways from the road and the gas station is still in business.

Whenever John or Terri was bad, Laurie would most likely send them to their rooms and yell at them before hand. Which wasn't that often because most of the time they were good.

⁵ 8mm film: It's a very old camera with films inside of it. The camera is also called the super 8. Its called this because it's bigger than the average camera back then so you could have a better picture.

Memories

Laurie and her granddaughter Andrea are most like each other because they both love to bake things. Every weekend Andrea would bake something, and maybe Laurie too. They both love to travel. One day Andrea wants to go to Paris, maybe even with Laurie because they both are adventurers. They both have curly hair. Also they love to help people with anything. Andrea helps people out at school like if they need a pencil, or if they need help with a problem with math or science, or maybe if they have a personal problem, then she loves to help people. Laurie is the same way. She builds homes for people that need them and helps a lot around church.

Laurie never got to see her grandkids that much because they lived so far away. Sp whenever she would come to visit in grand rapids she would always bring a little gift in her purse. When she got there Andrea and Bradley ran out of the house to look inside the purse and hug there grandmother of course. Then when they got the present they would run inside towards the kitchen playing with there new belonging.

When she was younger Laurie remembered her younger brother couldn't pronounce her name so she would be called Lala for a while until he would. She also got the nickname Laurie after she graduated high school. After that Laurie just kind of stuck with her.

The biggest compliment she ever got was basically nothing. Laurie got a lot of compliments in her lifetime but she doesn't think one is bigger than the other. She doesn't think she deserves a compliment if she didn't do anything out of the ordinary. But she also believes that God-given gifts are enough of a compliment to her.

If Laurie could win 1 million dollars she would give some of it to her family members to help with college and help fund their homes of course. She would also keep a little for herself. But most importantly she would give money to her church and give money to some charities that she supports or that she wants to support.

What Laurie does for fun now is that she does lots of activities with her senior group at church. She would go on bus trips with a lunch included also with a speaker.

She also is active with a bible study at church. Sometimes they would go see a movie or she would go by herself to see her family members or to another country. She went to many countries like Poland and Hungary to work with a few Habitat builds⁶.

She always looks forward to a happy, healthy life and always being close to her family. With their family they always had a special tradition. Laurie would always go to our house for christmas or we would go to hers. We never broke that tradition yet and Andrea never wants to because it is so fun to hang around her grandma.

She thinks she changed a lot by her looks, but yet she still feels young. More likely things have changed that isn't her. Like cars, tv's, homes, food, clothes, styles, technology, and words.

Laurie defines a good life by being happy with herself and her family. Satisfied with her daily living, being able to help others, and having faith in the Lord our God. God has always been apart of Laurie's life and she can thank her mother for that. Fiona taught her prayers, kept her through church until she was confirmed and was known what was right and wrong from her mother until a very early age.

Laurie sees herself as a person who lived a very long time. She is living a satisfying life and accomplished a lot and is still doing more to improve it.

Lastly is Laurie could go anywhere in any point of time, she wouldnt go anywhere. She likes the pioneer days and loves to read about them, but she doesn't want to go through the hardships they had to go through. She also loves the king, queen and castle age but she wouldn't want to go through the hardships either. She likes her TV and car, you can say she's spoiled but she likes just where she is now. So as Laurie said "This too shall pass so you shall take me off the time travel list!"

⁶ Habitat builds: Its where you get a group of volunteers to go work on houses for other people that need it. Mostly in non-developed countries to build houses and they would sometimes tour around the area with their off days.

Poems

Grandmas are for cooking
making all your favorite food
Grandmas are for hugs
because she can tell you're certain mood

Grandmas are for cheering
at all your sports
Grandmas are for fun
by making tons of blanket forts

Grandmas are for giving you
everything you need
But most importantly of all
Grandmas are for succeed

Thank you for everything Grandma
I Love You

Grandmas are the best!
No matter what they do, they
will always love you.

Favorite Family Recipe

Slip Down Quick **(hamburger macaroni casserole)**

Ingredients:

1 ½ hamburger

⅛ cup onion

dash of salt & pepper

2 cups of spaghetti

1 can tomato paste

1 large can of tomato sauce

How to cook it:

- combine tomato paste and tomato juice
- fry hamburger with onion, salt and pepper
- cook, drain and rinse the spaghetti
- combine the spaghetti, hamburger and tomato mix
- put layer of cheese on the mix if needed
- bake 350 degrees and 50 minutes
- let cool and then serve and enjoy