

Margaret Rose Weimer (1935-2012)



For my Dad, and my Kids, and my great family.

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Margaret Rose Weimer

Wednesday, January 04, 2012

Margaret Rose Weimer passed away on January 2, 2012. "Peggy" was and always will be a strong force in my life. For that, I am grateful. This blog is dedicated to her memory.

Memorial service to be on Jan 13 2012, Noon.

Monday, January 09, 2012

Father Tom Shea will be doing my mom's memorial service on Jan 13 2012. I joked about the lucky 13th, and he joked back about the bad rap God gets on many things by people, the 13th will be as beautiful day as all the days God gives us. This is the kind of thing my mom would have said.

Father Shea asked me to put together a small memoranda of my mother's life, focusing on the good things.



Well, here's a start...She was born Margaret Rose Jones on March 20, 1935. Here is a birth record. Although I am not sure if it is all that official, "Baby Girl Jones" has a ring to it.

Baby Girl Jones

Monday, January 09, 2012



Baby Girl Jones was given the official name of Margaret Rose Jones to mother - Gertrude, and Dad - Dewain. She had an older brother, Jimmy.

It's very likely my mom and grandma told me that she was named after Princess Margaret. My mom told me she didn't like the name, and Grandma gave her the full list of possible "margaret" nicknames that she could be called by...and Peggy was chosen.

Peggy Jones

Monday, January 09, 2012



Peggy Jones
and her brother, Jimmy Jones,



and her Mother Gertrude Jones,
and her Grandma and Grandpa Jones.
and Daddy Dewain Jones.



My Mom grew up in Wilkes-Barre Pennsylvania. These were very tough times (the depression era), she knew what poor was, and often explained it to me later, but her memories and family always seemed rich to me. Here she is at 12 years old.



At sometime they moved to Baltimore. I often think of West Side Story, when I think of her during those days. I have pictures of running/dancing on city rooftops etc...and of course the boyfriends that could have starred in Grease.



She went to school in a very strict catholic school. She had a very educated understanding of many things, and this pertained to the church teachings as well. She never was overly strict in pushing her beliefs but never wavered from her faith as well - all this she passed along to me.



She was pretty smart, anyone who knew my mom knew of her intelligence, but was told early that her dreams of a college education was not for girls. Thus it seems nursing was the most challenging option for someone like her at the time.

Baltimore and Nursehood

Monday, January 09, 2012

My Mom's family moved to Baltimore. This is when she went to nurse school, and got a job at a Baltimore Hospital. Nurse Jones...



This one had writing on the back "A cute Surgery - Baltimore Hospital"



I think her brother joined the Army then, and so there were a lot of changes for her now. For some reason she left for California. I was never sure exactly why, but knowing my daughter, Sarah, who is much like her, I think I understand. The exact reasons might have been boy falling out reasons, or she didn't like nursing, or her family broke up, and/or her Uncle made it all sound too good in California, and invited her to stay. She was 21 then. Oh yeah, by then her brother was living out there as well. Here she is after arriving...



Mom in California

Monday, January 09, 2012



So, shortly after arriving she got a job. Related to health care, in a pharmacy. This job seemed to suit her, it seems this timeframe was a lot of fun for her.

By then her brother was married to Milly, and they too were growing their roots deep into Southern California. Milly and Jimmy had a little girl, Alberta, and many of the pictures of those days included her.



It didn't take long for her to catch the eye (and vice versa) of a guy from Arizona.

Arizona Cowboy who never road a horse.

Monday, January 09, 2012

My Mom told me her Dad used to give her rides on his back as a little girl, singing a song about how she was going to marry "a cowboy who never road a horse". I haven't found that song, if it was a hit or not during those days, still looking, ...but I wrote one ;-). Anyway, the bizarre thing she told me, was granddad turned out to be a prophet.

Sometime in late 1956 or early 1957 she met my dad. Apparently he went to a movie with a friend and saw her in a restaurant after coming out. He found out where she worked and somehow found himself needing to go to the pharmacy a lot over the next few days.

It seems shortly thereafter he was a part of the family. There were a lot of pics with everybody having a good time it seemed.



It was about that time my Grandmother also moved to So. California, and my Dad did a good job winning her over as well.



So he didn't ride horse, but he did have a nice car. My dad said he and my mom went to the drive-in theaters a lot during that time.



I am pretty sure it was love at first sight, they were married within the year.

p.s. see comment, I found the song...

Margaret Rose Weimer

Monday, January 09, 2012

So Peggy Jones got married in Sept. 1957 (not too long before "Peggy Sue Got Married" was a Buddy Holly hit).

Not many photos were taken at the event, here's one of the few I found.



but some movie film survived and I had it digitized. Here's some clips. Capturing THE KISS and her smile was worth the effort.

[slideshow]





Basically, my parents got married and had their first kid (me!) when Rock and Roll and the Space Age were just beginning.

Married with Children - 1960 style.

Monday, January 09, 2012

If you knew my Mom, you knew she was a very private person and never liked to be photographed. She never had much use for vanity. When she was photographed, it was a dangerous thing, she could snap at you like a cat... I remember my Dad would lie in wait outside, when he knew she was coming out to the car to go to dinner or a party, waiting with a camera...once in awhile capturing those rare but golden smiles on film.



So, it's not surprising there are no photos of my Mom when pregnant.



Ok, so my parents were married in Sept 1957, and I was born 10 months later the following July. So, what were they doing for that whole month?



Once pregnant with my sister though, again no pics of her. Here's one of my Dad and I, where I am learning barely both how to walk into glass doors. You can see my Mom's reflection on the right, taking the picture. Here her head is looking down into the viewfinder, as this was one of those old style cameras twin-lens reflex box cameras (we still have it by the way, worth about \$75 on eBay).



Anyway, I am not sure when we moved to 1040 Bradford Drive in Glendora. As far as I knew, Kelly Jean (my sister, born in Oct. 1959) never lived anywhere else before that.

San Gabriel Valley

Monday, January 09, 2012

Sometime in the 50's San Gabriel Valley changed from acres of farmland to a suburban bedroom community. Mainly populated by middle class workers of the Southern California boom. This was the story of many areas within California. The only difference is, when you mention San Gabriel Valley, very few, even Californians, immediately recognized exactly where and what you are talking about. So in case you don't know, it goes from Pasadena, to Montebello (where I was born), to Arcadia (where my sister was born), to Glendora, and onward to San Dimas - all beneath the south-west side of the San Gabriel Mountains. Go farther south along the San Gabriel river where the Valley ends you'll find Whittier (where my Dad's brother, Oliver lived).

Back then the freeways were still being built, but even still, the beach and Disneyland were well within reach for a weekend getaway.



Our first house was on 1041 Bradford Drive, Glendora, alongside what was to be the foothill hwy, now the I-210. I remember a lot of rural mountainous areas for explorations (mountains to me then, but really just hills), and a "wash" - a concrete flood channel (a river to me though). In between the river and the mountains were acres of wilderness. Well, that's how I remember it.

I wrote a song based on those memories (see comment). It was from 1041 Bradford drive

I remember my mom calling out into the woods (where we were playing in treehouses or whatever) , "Clay! Clay!, Clay!" and I would yell back, "What!", and she would answer "It's dinner time, come home"

Its all just a bunch of suburbia now if you google the address (but the wash and hills are still there ;-)

It's too bad we didn't seem to use the camera much, but the movie camera got a lot of attention. So many of the snaps here are from the home movies, which actually is pretty cool as they are like snaps of memories in Glendora. My Uncle Jimmy swinging me in the front yard. My Mom loved Palm Springs (and Vegas), and I remember just on a whim on random weekends, they'd tell me to grab my swim suite and get into the car cause we are going to the desert. My Mom and Kelly Jean next to our black pickup truck (in those days you could ride in the back, and man that was fun) ...Disneyland, beaches, Mount Baldy (my mom loved the snowsled)...





My Mom was pretty strict on us going to Church, some snaps here are of my first Holy Communion.



I remember near our house a drive-in burger joint that my mom loved, called "In and Out" on arrowhead highway. I hated the place cause there was all that weird sauce, tomatoes and lettuce on the burgers...yeah, plain ole McDonalds was for me, which she never cared for (I have since changed my opinion).

These pictures were probably taken just before we moved in 1968 or 69.





Making Ends Meet

Tuesday, January 10, 2012

My Dad was a hard worker, a lineman, and my Mom often tried to explain why he was not home sometimes, or why I couldn't wake him up and play with him during the day after he came home from working all night. Basically a lineman in the 1960's and 70's was like a cowboy of the 20th century. Powerlines needed to be built everywhere, always on the road, and when not, always on call, ready to hit the road when powerlines and transformers needed fixing.

I remember her dreading the stormy nights, and the inevitable phone calls late in the evening, and watching him put on his boots before going into the dark windy and rainy night.

He worked hard, and played hard. I remember parties at our house, dancing, card games, arm wrestling contests (my Dad always won). Lot's of friends and relatives that visited, and we visited. Many were lineman, one couple was Joe and Pauline. Pauline was my Mom's best friend for most of her life. Joe (another lineman) was my Dad's.



My Mom was always proud of my dad, sometimes spoke of him like he was the greatest man alive, and I believed her - still do. I have some crazy pics and film of him high up on towers and poles. I remember my mom often joked about how he couldn't walk through our hallway without knocking down pictures, yet somehow survived hundreds of feet in the air on a 3 inch steel beam.



I have to say though, with all her worrying about him, she sure loved those OT checks he would bring home. She handled all the finances in the family. Yep, I remember paychecks, bringing home the bacon in those days was pretty awarding - usually a friday, and he'd get a humongous hug and kiss before an always delicious dinner. Unlike today, with direct deposit there is no feeling of that, the only time my wife Kelly mentions my pay is when there is a missing expense report ;-)

Speaking of dinner, my Mom became a very good cook, she learned the best from my Grandma. I guess however, my dad was less than complementary in the early days, and since Grandma was often around though, she was more than willing to hand over the duties when she could.

Towards the end of the 60's we sold our house and moved to South Pasadena. It wasn't long though, before we moved out of San Gabriel Valley altogether.

In 1970 we bought a new house (not built yet) on 19352 McLaren Ln, in Huntington Beach, CA. This was Orange County, when there were still a few oranges around I think. Didn't matter, the beach was only 1.5 miles away. I think this picture is in front of the HB house.



I remember during those days my Grandma moved in with us.



I also remember my mom's dad coming to visit for a week from Boston. I thought he was hilarious. He made chili (the best i ever had) and joked about Californians. He had a pretty colorful life, grew up in Worchester MA, a merchant marine as a young boy, and a boxer (thus went by the name of Nuxsey), he also ran a bar I think. He was pure east coast, and I remember my Mom was very happy he was there.



From the ocean to the desert, and back again

Wednesday, January 11, 2012

The contracting construction job market for my Dad in So. California tended to be hot and cold. It was hot in Orange County for awhile, which is why we moved to HB. Then got cold later in the 70's. He had to work around the country - some long jobs in New York and Seattle over the years, and my Mom was there with him, and I remember she loved being with him during those times. This meant however, that Grandma raised us during those extended periods. I was pretty cool about it because I was a teenager and that meant I could get away with a lot of things. Grandma was not a strict as Mom, and so my grades sorta lagged during High School.

There are pictures somewhere of those work trips my Mom had with my Dad, as soon as I find them I'll post them here. In fact I am sure there are more pics of the 70's somewhere, I'll have to keep looking.

In 1976 after I graduated from High School they decided to buy a motel in Desert Hot Springs, near Palm Springs. My Mom seemed to have a love for the desert back then, I guess because of all those cold eastern days she grew up with. So they sold the HB house, and I had to follow.



This was a 15 room motel, large swimming pool and indoor spa (with naturally hot mineral well water). It also had an attached Manager's unit and office where my Mom, Dad, Sister and Grandma lived. I lived in a little half room in the back. In fact I think the number on the door was 12 1/2.

Desert Hot Springs was famous for its hot mineral waters which was reputed to have therapeutic value. My Grandma and Mom would work the rooms every day. I would have to help, mostly with the pool and spa cleaning chores. I remember meeting a lot of characters back then, many people from the east coast and the Mediterranean areas of Europe loved the place, many Orthodox Jews. My Mom was a tough business person, you paid for the room up front, she made me work the odd jobs - if there were people to pick up at Palm Springs airport, that was my job. I remember picking up a beautiful swedish girl once, er, well that's not part of this story ;-).

The job market for my Dad was real hot in the Palm Springs area (like 120 degrees hot), so he helped at the Motel when he could. Then my Dad, after prodding from my Mom, got me into the union, and before I knew it I was working along side him as a "grunt", AKA groundman.

So, in 1978 I was making pretty solid money there for a 19 year old. My Mom was happy about that. She probably gave up her dreams of me going to college, just as she did herself way back when. She strongly believed at the very least a man should have a trade, and thought she had me on the right direction. For awhile the money was cool, but I rebelled after digging one too many ditches in sand dunes in 110 degree weather. I decided to move back to HB on my own, and focus on my education (and my rock star career ...;)

My Mom and Dad, shortly afterwards decided around the end of 1979 that it was time to sell the Motel (again I wish we had more pics of those times - I'll keep looking).

It wasn't too long before they bought a house on a golf country club in Wickenburg Arizona, my Dad's hometown. My Grandma Ella (my Dad's mom) and many relatives lived nearby. Yes, of course no pics yet, but here's one of the many views I remember.



It was about a 6 or 7 hour commute from HB, and I did it often for visits. My Dad would commute to Palm Springs still for work, about a 4 hour drive, and so was often not home during the week. After about two years, my Grandma and Mom decided they couldn't handle the desert life anymore...(I think it was that rattlesnake they found in one of the bathrooms that was the final straw).

Also, at that time around the end of 1980, I had bought a 3 bedroom condo in HB. I was able to do it with some of the construction work money, and also my Mom and Dad helped out. It actually was her idea, maybe a way to assure I would keep working and also have a good investment.

By the end of 1981 however I decided school was more important to me and basically quit working.

So, the price I would pay was: my Mom and Grandma came back to live with me. Eventually my Dad did too, as Orange County work was booming again.

Now my Mom was back on my back. My days of freedom, fun and frolicking were over. I was a 22 year old bum that had about 1 years worth of general college completed. To make it worse I decided to change my degree from Business to Computer Science the beginning of 1983. Then to make it worse I got a programming job that paid little. Then to make it worse I fell for my future wife (that itself wasn't bad, its just that I had no time nor money for a relationship).

My Mom accepted no excuses, she pushed pushed pushed. I eventually got that degree in early 1985 and was facing several hot job offers. We decided on the San Jose job, and I am pretty sure my Mom helped me pack my bags. She was pretty proud, and I bet, pretty relieved I wasn't going to be a bum anymore.

My Son the Engineer

Thursday, January 12, 2012

I remember the first morning I was to start work, there on the San Jose Mercury News front page was a big story about how Steve Jobs was out of Apple. I remember calling my Mom that night, and telling her everything about my day, including the Steve Jobs article. She never understood my career exactly, but did understand the players in my

industry and last year when Jobs passed away, she called me and we talked about that day in 1985.

The thing about my Mom was, a phone call was not just a phone call. It was a talk show, and she was the host. Funny thing about those two years of being single, making money and having lots of time on my hands is I spent a lot of time on the phone with my Mom and future wife, and both were very inquisitive. The phones calls would last for hours.

I remember my Mom's favorite restaurant in Orange County was Captain Jack's in Seal Beach near HB. That is where my parents met Kelly Marie Mitchell while I was going to school. Since then she always express a lot of fondness for Kelly, not so much about other girls (all my friends as a matter of fact), but loved Kelly. Yep, strange I fell in love with a Kelly, same name as my sister. But I think she loved Kelly Marie at that time especially because she was a primary reason why I traveled back to So. Cal almost every weekend I had a chance - just to have a date with Kelly - and that meant I would be staying with Mom. Eventually in 1987 Kelly and I married.

Here's my mom at Kelly's shower.



Here's some wedding pics from Nov. 1987





Ok, my Grandmas...CUTE!



If you look carefully those Grandmas are in my Mom and Dad's wedding snaps 30 years prior. They just didn't have the better cameras back then.

So Kelly and I bought a house in San Jose, had a baby, and then another (James). We often visited our parents in So. Cal. Here is a visit in 1989 at the Huntington Beach condo.





Here's my Mom playing with Michael and my Grandma Gertie with James.



In 1994 Kelly was pregnant again, I think by the start of 1995 we all knew she would be a girl.

I am now going to break from Father Sullivan's suggestion I only focus on the good things. I am only putting down it here because this one bad thing led to a very good thing.

Margaret Weimer called her son in the spring of 1995 and told him she had liver/colon cancer. It was shortly thereafter I learned that it was in-operable cancer, and terminal.

All of us came up with a plan. Kelly, pregnant with Sarah and wanting a bigger house decided we should buy a larger house in Campbell. My Mom (and Kelly) decided my parents would purchase the San Jose house. It was all done before the summer.

We researched, and found some great doctors. I'll never forget the first appointment. It was with a Dr. James Cohen recommended by Kelly's friend Kim. And he asked why the Doctors in Orange County didn't operate. My Mom said, because they said it was impossible. Dr. Cohen shook his head and said, "well we are more aggressive here I guess".

He recommended Dr. Gutman (yes, that is the name)...the surgery lasted about 4 hours, My dad, my Dad's brother Oliver, and his wife Lorraine and I sat there at the hospital biting nails during it all. Then Dr. Gutman came out with a smile on his face and said "Mr. Weimer, she'll be fine, I got it all out, it was a good surgery". I said "Huh?, what do mean you got it all out?".

Sounded cocky yes, but man oh man, he sure was sure. I told Dr. Cohen about this, and he said something about surgeons always thinking they're Gods and said "I'll decide

when it is 'all out' of your mother".

He then proceeded to chemo the heck out of her within an intense short period of time. By July 1995 her treatment was over. Here's a pic in June with her newborn grand daughter.



We didn't know it then. But my Mom was cured, and lived another 17 years near us in San Jose.

Grandma Peggy

Thursday, January 12, 2012

So these were the Grandma Peggy years. These were the years my Mom warned me about. She always said when I was a kid giving her trouble, "I can't wait till you have kids and I am a Grandma, I am going to say 'I Told You So!' and spoil my Grandkids silly"

The great thing about those 17 years is she was given the opportunity to be a grandmother.



She watch all the little league baseball games,



and all the many basketball games,



many great Holidays, many great dinners at her house. From when the kids were tiny, till they were humongous...up until the High School and College years. She attended the kids many graduations,



and the many school functions (those Christmas carol nights at middle school), the Baptisms, the Holy Communions,

and always insisted we go with her to Mass on Christmas and Easter Sundays. The last time we all went to church together was Easter Sunday 2011, and I remember my Mom complementing how good the Mass was (not something she often did, but she was right, it was exceptional).



The last game she attended was Sarah's for a High School Varsity Holiday tournament championship. Sarah was feeling some anxiety, about the game and other things. My Mom explained to me she completely understood what Sarah was going through. She told Sarah that night the same thing. Somehow they understood each other in a way I couldn't understand I guess.

The next last big cool memory of my Mom, was after I got home from my last long east coast trip. I called her on the way from the airport, as I know she always complains about me not calling (hey, my Mom always got a call from me on average 1 or 2 phones calls a week, all my life - I always thought that was pretty good)

Well, I called her on the phone when Kelly picked me up at the San Jose airport this past December the week bfore the Holidays. I said I was sorry i didn't call while gone. I told her Pittsburg was gorgoeus and she should see it (she hated pittspburg in the old days) and she asked a a bunch of questions about the trip. Somehow wanting (as usual) to tell her all the major highlights of the trip and the characters involved - I told her everything in a nutshell anticipating all her talk show host like questions - and apologixed to her I had to go because we were almost home and I was dead tired and wanted to go to sleep. She understood...said bye, and "I'm just glad you're home safe, now I can relax".



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