

From Rick

Reflections on Nana by her grandson, Ricky Morton

Springtime is a time for birth, growth, and renewal. It also follows winter, a time for dormancy, and death. I sit here watching springtime unfold and reflect on the death of my grandmother while at the same time reveling in the birth of our 7-month-old son, Alexander. I imagine Nana holding her 7-month-old daughter, Marion, my mother, and also basking in the glow of a new life and all of the possibilities that that new life brings. I did not know Nana until much later but as I grew and pieced her life story together from what I heard at family gatherings and during quiet times with her and with my mom, I came to realize that she had and overcame some pretty big challenges in her life. When I first met her though, she was full of life, and was ready to teach us how to enjoy life too. She taught us how to swim, took us deep sea fishing, and taught us how to play and really enjoy games! Her love for gardening was passed on down to my mother and now as I look out into our glorious garden, I am sure my love for gardening is a gift from her as is my love for cooking. Like her, I rarely use recipes and often will just pull food out of the fridge and will come up with something that I, as we say, "*just threw together.*" As I was growing up I used to tell people that Nana could sweep the floor and turn it into lobster Newberg! We did not always see eye to eye, but I know she loved me deeply and as I sit and reflect on our life together, I am glad she was my Nana and I cherish all of the gifts she gave me, especially Polish persistence (some might call it stubbornness), the ability to really enjoy life, and a deep respect for the diversity of my fellow humans. I will always keep her in my heart, right next to my mother so that they can both guide me to be a good parent for Alexander and pass on their gifts to him so he may enjoy life as much as they did and in turn I do. Rest in peace Nana and thank you for all you gave to all of us.