

# Mom's Newsletter

*"This was a very grave situation...but not anymore"*

February 2006 Volume 19, No. 1

*I want to thank my Aunt Lorraine and my cousins Judy, Jack and Joanie for allowing me the opportunity to say a few words about my uncle, Bing Miller. As many of you know, he was a father, a grandfather, a great-grandfather (accent on the great), a veteran, an athlete, a grocer, a merchant, a gentle soul and a tremendously hilarious individual who knew how to wear a hat. But there are other lesser-known roles my uncle played, including father figure to myself and my sisters, grandfather-figure to our children, a good friend to everyone here today and a great, great dancer.*

*His recent passing, while not completely unexpected, still comes as a shock to all of us as we realize we will miss him, but we also miss his incredible wisdom and the true pleasure of his company. And I can say without qualification that they don't make them like Bing Miller anymore.*

*As many of you know, I was brought up by people who tended to giggle at funerals and as I began to write down a few memories, I started to smile and giggle over some of my Uncle Bing stories that quickly came to mind. I had to keep a few of them off the list, for a variety of reasons, but I am confident I picked the best ones to share:*

*One of my first and fondest memories of my Uncle Bing happened when I could have not been more than five years old. We were at the cabin on French Lake and my sister Liz and I were playing with my dear cousin Joanie. It may have been the fourth of July (I am not positive of that fact) because my memory has Uncle Bing leading us three, waving a large American flag, down the dirt road from the cabin, marching towards the French Lake Resort and Tavern. I believe it was our first official parade and also confident that this adventure set the stage for our ongoing love of parades as we grew older. Still to this day, theories on his motivations vary wildly depending on who you talk to: Aunt Lorraine has her theories, Joanie, Liz and I have ours. No matter what the facts were surrounding this example or the participants in this caper, it was the first time of many times that I was convinced that my Uncle Bing was the coolest guy in the world.*

*Another related series of memories deals with life in Faribault during the holidays. I cannot remember any holiday growing up that was spent anywhere other than Uncle Bing and Aunt Lorraine's house. All holidays since have been compared against those and I am proud to say that holidays with my Uncle and Aunt are the ones that make the most sense and where I and my sisters are always most comfortable.*

*Again, our reasons for being at their home were many but suffice it to say that the top two were the love and sense of family we felt and the third reason, which almost tied for second, was the difference between Aunt Lorraine's cooking and our mom's and I will withhold further comment. As I have grown up, I have been other places during Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter, but I always wonder what great-tasting food Aunt Lorraine has made, what funny jokes my Uncle Bing is cracking (and I am missing) and what food my cousin Lorrie had put on her plate that was truly and rightfully mine.*

*Today is a difficult day for all of us and I, like all of you, mourn his passing. But I allow myself some comfort that he is in better place: reunited with his parents, his brothers and sister, looking down at us all and wanting us not to feel sad but to laugh together and to recall other stories that brought out the best in all of us.*

*As I conclude and sum up my feelings, all I can say is that he was loved his family, he loved his country and heaven just got a whole lot funnier.*