



## Richard Dennis Grange

September 18, 1923 - July 7, 2012

RICHARD DENNIS GRANGE September 18, 1923 ~ July 7, 2012 "Safe flight, Mission Complete, Time to Head Home" On July 7, 2012, our family and the world lost one of the best from the "Greatest Generation." Dick passed away peacefully at Legacy Hospital, surrounded by loved ones grateful to be in his presence through his final moments. He always loved a crowd and surely felt comfort in the love around him until he departed to "go home." Richard "Dick" Grange was born to Ross and Anna Grange on September 18, 1923, in Mobridge, South Dakota, the fifth of nine children. Dick graduated from Mobridge High School in 1941 and attended South Dakota School of Mines in Rapid City. His eagerness to work took him out of the classroom and into the world. In 1943, at nineteen, Dick joined the Army Air Corps as a waist gunner and photographer on the B-24 bomber. He was a member of the 15th Air Corps B-24 Bomber Squad, and attached to the 454th Bomb Group. Dick was stationed in Cerignola, Italy, and after completing 35 missions, was honorably discharged in 1945. He was the recipient of both a Purple Heart and the Distinguished Flying Cross—the highest award given by the Army Air Corps at that time. Dick truly embodied the ideals that define the Greatest Generation. He was proud to have served his country and proud to be an American. On March 6, 1944, Dick married Margie Steinke. From the same hometown, their friendship blossomed in high school and spanned seventy-five years that included sixty-eight as husband and wife. Following family who headed west before them, the young couple moved to Vancouver, Washington in 1948. In

1956, Dick and Margie moved to Walnut Grove after purchasing their first home—a burnt out house on five acres. Dick convinced his pregnant wife while she looked up at open sky from the basement where she stood in a knee-high puddle of water that "It'll be great!" He spent many hours working to turn the house into their castle. Dick had a heart bigger than his beloved five country acres; he looked for and found the good in all people and all things. With his fun sense of humor and contagious laugh, he welcomed hundreds of people to his home who found true Midwestern hospitality: Camaraderie, acceptance, education and lasting friendships. True to the sign, Grangeville was established in 1956 and its population varied! Over the years, his work experiences ranged from shipyard welding to founder of Grange's Rug Company in the 50's. He also worked for Flying A / Phillips 66 oil companies, Western Electric and retired from the maintenance department with the Evergreen School District. Friends and neighbors were drawn to Dick's shop where there was always a project to engineer, an issue to debate and a lesson to learn. He was respected as the Dean of Students at his "63rd Street College." Dick set up a barber shop in his basement where he willingly gave free haircuts to many. His most loyal customer was his big brother Jim. Dick was indeed a jack of all trades! All it took for anyone—regardless of their age—was that first handshake to begin a memorable friendship with Dick Grange, a man in his Winter years who possessed a spirit of Spring. His father always told him "Make a new friend every day." He continued to embrace that advice through his final season of life. Since his passing, a new friend expressed that with which many agree, "Although our friendship was far too short, it lacked nothing in its kinship." He will be long remembered as a man of great character and compassion. Dick is survived by his lifelong love, Margie; his daughters and their spouses, Jill and Rene Bollman, Jan Grange, Laurie and Craig Cassidy, Lisa and David Hunsinger and "son," Jerry Desmet; grandchildren, Spencer, Andrew and Tyler Desmet, Rebecca Bollman and Amy Doehne, and Ross, Lauren and Alli Hunsinger; his great-grandchildren, Mackenzie, Brecken, Talan, Cassidy and Emily; his siblings, William (Bill)

Grange, Ross (Dint) Grange and Beth Jurgensen; and his legacy includes a loyal and loving circle of extended family and friends. He was preceded in death by his parents; siblings, Lorrie, Jim, Dorrie, Jean and Cathy; and granddaughter, Jessica. A military graveside service will be on Saturday, July 28, 2012, at 1:00 p.m. at Evergreen Memorial Gardens, 1101 NE 112th Ave., Vancouver, WA 98684. Following the service, the Patriot Guard will escort attendees to the Grange family home where we will gather for a memorial tribute celebrating Dick's life. Memorial contributions may be made in his name to Shriners Hospital or The American Heart Association .

# Tribute Wall



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**Evergreen Memorial Gardens** - July 03, 2025 at 09:38 PM



“ Nancy grew up in Walnut Grove, living across the street from Grangeville since they arrived in 1956. After school and marriage, Hector and Nancy moved into the house formerly occupied by Nancy's aunt and have been neighbors of Dick and Marge since 1994. Dick was the perfect neighbor and friend, generous to all with his spirit and sharing all his possessions. We will miss him tremendously in *The Neighborhood*.

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**Nancy and Hector Flores** - July 25, 2012 at 12:00 AM