Truly I Am Blessed

I don't know if I qualify as being diverse, but being 64, sleeping with a dog, cat and on occasion, a nine year old granddaughter should quality me for something. I don't work as such, I just kind of find myself volunteering and I run the gauntlet of ages preschool and up. My husband has a serious brain disorder and resides in Terraceview Lodge, while my Granddaughter and I live in a small duplex near Uplands School with the dog and cat.

I moved to Terrace in 1956 and so I remember sitting in the "Snack Bar" eating chips after school and walking along the dirt roads with little dust balls puffing up with each step I took. The wooden sidewalks 1 found unique, having moved here from a land of perfect parks and pavement. I discovered "boys" here in Terrace, and it is with fond memory and a smile I remember one special boy with his special flame painted car.

I went to School at Skeena and most of the kids seemed to take each other for granted. A lot of us came from what would be now referred to as low income families; back then it was “the wrong side of the tracks." I still must smile as I remember all those kids voted for me to have a chance to become May Queen depending on how many tickets one sold. Well, my Dad sold a lot. being a bartender at the old Terrace Hotel and I was a shoo in.

I married young, had five children and worked off and on at the Royal Bank and Bank of Montreal, between volunteer work in schools and canvassing for whatever worthy cause came my way. My husband Elmer, a carpenter taught me a lot about construction and I worked along side of him as much as 1 could building houses. Life was good.

We moved to Williams Lake in the earls eighties and I was in my glory "farming." We bought 160 acres and some cows and some chickens, ducks, geese, pigs, lambs', believe me 1 had it all. 1 didn't know a bull from a cow. but 1 soon learned and I must smile as 1 recall the "mare" I bought for my daughter that wasn't a mare at all.
But things have a way of changing and not always for the best. Troubles within the family led me to The Parents Together Group of British Columbia and it was there I met and became fast friends with Moms and Dads from all walks to life...all we had in common was out of control kids and each other. Many of us encountered hard times that to this day never end. With a sense of humour and a shoulder to cry on we live our life's as best we can.

At the age of 52, Elmer became ill and diagnosed with "Picks" disease, a type of dementia that affects the fronlotemporal lobes. He was not able to work and progressively lost his speech, all his carpentry skills and the ability to perform even the most mundane chores. I've tried so hard to do whatever he could to make it easier for me all the while knowing his disease was mercilessly advancing.

And then, God sent us a gift and her name was Maggy Mae. My son, her Father and April, her Mother were unable to take proper care of her and so she came into our lives shortly before she turned three. She became the 'apple of her Grandpas 'eye and the three of us learned to take care of one and other.

In 2004 we sold our farm and moved back to Terrace where we would be nearer to family and my daughters could help me raise Maggy and take care of" their Dad. All decisions were left to me now and 1 second-guessed every move I made. Elmer had taken such good care of me and 1 fought facing the realization that the man I had known was no longer there. Maggy accepted it though, and she explained to me that as she was growing older, her Grandpa was becoming a young child again.

She would take him by the hand, walk with him, read him stories, keep him company. And when the day came that he was placed in Terrace view .she held my hand and this little girl said" It's ok. Nan. it's best for him .Grandpa would understand,." And when 1 watched him crawl around the floors of his ward and tried to pick him up, she stopped me. “Leave him be Nan." she said, "he thinks he's working and fixing the floor, and you know, he was always happiest when lie was working."

Yes, that I know and so I do what J do best, what makes me happiest. . I volunteer in the schools, at Terraceview, At the Hospital auxiliary , the Sunshine Center, at the old Cemetery... I work with the young and the old and Maggy volunteers right along side me. Oh .truly I have been Blessed.

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