



Happy 70th Anniversary Clara and Hal Neugebauer

by Bonnie Neugebauer

Clara and Hal fell in love over 70 years ago, and they had three sons. It's easy for anyone to see that from their parents, Roger, Bob, and Brian inherited:

- their height
- a passion for sports — both as participants and fans
- an enjoyment of reading
- a sense of humor
- a dedication to family
- a happy, wholesome childhood
- a competitive spirit and a high bar for achievement

We asked Clara and Hal to share with us what they would like us to have learned from them:

Hal talked about being frugal and the times when that was a good thing and other times when it was not. But he also talked about the importance of sharing resources generously in the spirit of charity. "You've got to set aside investments for retirement and it seems about right to tithe your income. Not having money doesn't mean you are poor. Live life day by day."

Clara spoke about spirituality and a church-centered life. She committed to staying at home with her children, until they were in their teens. "I never could understand why people complain about driving their kids to sports and activities. This time was so special to me because it was such a great opportunity to talk to my boys individually — they were trapped in the car with me."

Next we asked our children what they learned from their grandparents:

- Know your limits, but don't let them limit you.
- See people not just as they are, but as you know they can be — and hold them accountable.
- Even though you can say everything, don't.
- Downsize and pass along whatever isn't important to have right now.
- Always have cake.
- Respect each other.
- Work hard.
- Playing games is a great way to be together.

And here are some things I've learned through 40-plus years of observation:

- Be a good listener and pay attention, so when the time is right you can interject something truly clever.
- Laughing at the same stories over and over — truly enjoying the story and laughing — is a way to say "I love you."
- Doing crossword puzzles, playing Boggle, working jigsaw puzzles, and reading keep your mind sharp.
- Move your own cheese — make your own decisions.
- Speak well of others and when someone has done a kindness, shout it out.
- Always say the other partner is the lucky one.

One of the most powerful lessons that Hal and Clara can offer is for everyone, including each of you. Everything we do matters and touches others — every decision, every action, every word. Early childhood programs are filled with sounds and activity — and all of it matters. Seventy years from now, or 95 or 3, what lessons will be traced back to each of us?

Thank you, Mom and Dad.