

Susan Edberg Birgit Cier Eulogy – 2017/02/09

I would just like to share a little bit about my time with Aunt Birgit.

She became a great part of my life beginning in January 2011 when she was 90 years old. Her nephew Tim called one evening and told us she was in the hospital with pneumonia. She had called a cab to transport her. She recovered, went to rehab, and was back at her apartment in no time. A few months later, she fell from her bed and hit her eyebrow on the corner of her night table. After she stopped the bleeding, she drove herself to ER and had to get 4 stitches. I'm sure she had driven to the hospital at times before this and would do it again. She just refused to use her emergency cord. This is definitely an example of independent Birgit with some stubbornness thrown in.

And so began my involvement and regular visits with her starting in late 2011. Our routine would include doctors' visits, shopping, going out to eat and the never-ending paperwork that she would save for me to look over when I got there.

Our shopping trips were always an adventure. She loved going to Penney's. She always claimed she needed new clothes even though she had two 8' closets full. We would pick out many tops, slacks and even bras on one trip and we'd take them all into the fitting room. It seemed like forever before we got out of there and we might be lucky if one item fit, but most of the time nothing did. She went out of Penney's with no new items, but it didn't seem to bother her too much. I went out with a headache! But that was okay, she got her shopping trip!

She enjoyed Wendy's and we always went for lunch while I was there. She would order a junior cheeseburger deluxe and a chocolate Frosty. I would say "Birgit don't you just want the kiddie size Frosty?" and she would tell me "no, I want the bigger size" and she proceeded to finish it to the last drop. Frostys were her favorite and spumoni ice cream was always stocked in her freezer. I could also add strawberry and chocolate flavors, so she loved her ice cream! She enjoyed going to Golden Corral. She liked that they had the varieties of food, even though she always picked the same items. It was amazing that she could maneuver a cane and her food tray, but I guess she was determined.

A couple of years ago, Tim, Sharon, and I wanted to take her out for her birthday and she chose Golden Corral as usual. Well, it was also Mother's Day and when we got to the restaurant, the line was out the door, so we continued to try to find somewhere else. We found a Chinese restaurant and it had people waiting outside, too. Driving by a strip mall, we

saw Jersey Mike's Subs. She said she was willing to try it and there was no waiting. She ordered the pastrami reuben hot sub and really liked it. And guess what was next door to Jersey Mike's – Cold Stone Creamery, so we had ice cream for dessert, of course.

When I would call her, some things she would tell me were pretty funny. I would ask how she was and she would often say "I'm hanging in there" and then talking about her current condition, she'd say "it's like my head is up in the air and I want to pull it down", "I feel like a dead stone", or she was "sorta spacy". One time she told me that she knew it was IL calling by the telephone ring.

Lastly, I have to tell you a story that one of Birgit's caregivers, Vangie, told me when I was there over her 95th birthday in May last year. Vangie said she went into Birgit's room early to give her medications. Birgit was awake in bed and she told Vangie (quite urgently) that she had to go to her court hearing. Vangie asked court hearing? Birgit said yes, I have a court hearing today and they told me I'm being sentenced to death and that I just have to be patient. Vangie went along with the story while Birgit repeated it a couple of times. Birgit said there was a judge and a jury. So Vangie asked her who was the judge at her hearing. Birgit told her the judge was God and the jurors were angels. Later that day, Vangie asked if she remembered talking about the court hearing and Birgit had no recollection, so she probably was still half asleep when telling the story. In the last couple of years, she often said she was tired and ready to go. She said to her caregivers on many mornings "darn, I woke up". During one hospital visit, she told me "if God is calling me, let me go" and she got her wish at last. Rest peacefully, Aunt Birgit. We love you.