



# Leslie Merle Whalen

JUL 14, 1924 - SEP 22, 2014



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# Leslie Merle Whalen

JUL 14, 1924 - SEP 22, 2014

**L**eslie “Merle” Whalen, age 90, passed away in her home in St. Helens Oregon on Monday September 22, 2014. She died of natural causes with family at her side.

Born July 14, 1924 in Bado Missouri to Agnes Hinkle Simmons and Ray Simmons, Leslie is the eldest of five children. Brother Jim Simmons, brother Don Simmons, brother David Simmons, sister Veta Azure.

Leslie was married to Edward Bernard Whalen May 25th of 1945. At the time of Ed’s passing October 6, 2000, they had been married for 55 years.

By virtue of her strength and resolve, Leslie epitomized what we know as the greatest generation. The oldest of five children, Leslie left southern Missouri when she was eight years old. She lived with her family in Pavilion Wyoming for three years before moving to Idaho where she finished middle school. Leslie then moved to Newberg Oregon where she met and married her husband Ed. “Merle” lived in St. Helens where they raised their family for the final 65 years of her life.

Early in life, Leslie and her family followed work where work could be found. Life wasn’t easy, and long days picking crops was the means to provide as the family moved West. In World War II, Leslie worked with her mother as a welder for Kaiser Shipbuilding where they worked in difficult conditions inside the double bottoms of Liberty Ships. Later in life she spent many years as a trusted and knowledgeable real estate broker, eventually owning her own business. Hard work and family duty was the foundation of who she was. And nothing about her life was ever easy. Though you would never hear her complain.

Leslie truly loved to garden. Both food vegetables and flowers. And her garden was an impressive one for many years in the fertile soil of the Columbia River floodplain.

Leslie could do more than just sew. She made cloths and quilts for her family that will remain used and admired for years to come. But her skills and interests were many. Leslie was an avid



## Obituary

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deer hunter and Steelhead fisherman. In a deer camp, she did the lion's share of the work and meal preparation. In the field with a rifle, her largest Mule deer bested her husband's largest buck ever. In addition to being recognized by fish and wildlife as one of very few to tag a forked horn mule deer doe in Eastern Oregon. Leslie also loved to go camping with family and friends. And as much as anything else, Leslie loved to be a grandmother.

"Merle" Whalen, to her core, was all about taking care of other people. This kindness extended far beyond her family. And her generosity and selflessness knew no limits. But her work ethic and emotional strength during difficult times were equal compliments to her warm heart. She will be missed by many. But her strength of character will be remembered and passed on for years to come.

### Family

Leslie Whalen is survived by three children, nine grandchildren, and eight great grandchildren  
Son Ron Whalen of Friday Harbor Washington, Daughter Joanne Rockwell of St. Helens Oregon,  
Daughter Carolyn Craig of Molowlla Oregon.

Grandchildren – Josie Long, Leslie Crippen, Carter Whalen, Dallas Whalen, Bristol Whalen,  
Desirae Whalen, Kevin Rockwell, Mike Rockwell, Shawna Bergeron.

Great Grandchildren – Olivia Long, Kai Whalen, Saylor Whalen, Kayla Whalen, Logan Rockwell,  
Ewan Rockwell, Sydney Bergeron, Savannah Bergeron.

### Service

Services will be held at 1:00 on Sunday September 28th at the Columbia Funeral Home in St.  
Helens Oregon.

Reception to be immediately followed at the St. Helens Senior Center.  
375 South 15th Street St. Helens Oregon




# Events


**Leslie Merle Whalen**

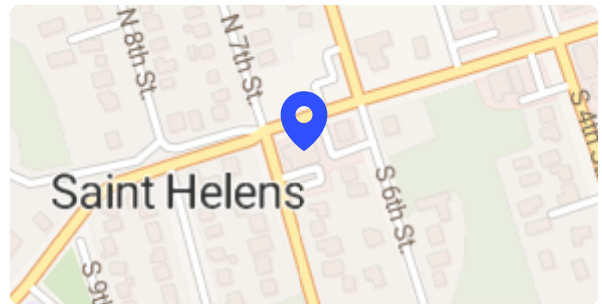
JUL 14, 1924 - SEP 22, 2014

## Funeral Service


 **Sunday**, September 28, 2014

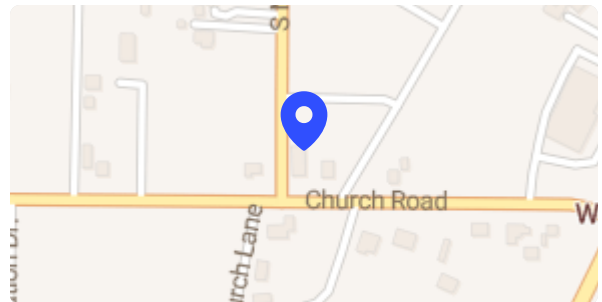
 1:00 PM PT

 **Columbia Funeral Home & Cremation Center**  
681 Columbia Blvd., St. Helens OR 97051



## Cemetery Details

 **Bethany Memorial Cemetery**  
34721 Church Road, Warren OR 97053





# Tribute Wall

**Leslie Merle Whalen**

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**Dave Cupp** posted:

Merle and her family have been friends of the Cupp family for a long time she will be never be forgotten. Dave Cupp

October 2 at 2:02 AM



**Kathy Cooper Ashley** lit a candle in honor of Leslie.



September 29 at 2:30 PM



**Cindy Carter** posted:

Merle has been a customer of mine for many years. She was one of my favorite people! I was delighted when she recovered and was able to drive again. She was sure tickled about that. Even though I only knew her through her mailing gifts to all the grandkids, I considered her a friend. She will be greatly missed. My sincere condolences go out to all her family and friends. Cindy Carter Mailboxes Northwest

September 26 at 7:35 AM



**Anonymous** sent a Summer's Light Bouquet to the Whalen family.



September 26 at 6:37 AM



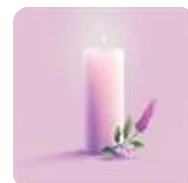
**The Guida Girls** lit a candle in honor of Leslie.



September 25 at 3:55 AM



**Deborah Champagne** lit a candle in honor of Leslie.



September 24 at 2:13 PM



## Tribute Wall

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**Anonymous** sent an Arrive in Style to the Whalen family.



September 24 at 1:31 PM



# **Memories only last if you share them**

Join us in honoring Leslie by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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