



## Evelyn L. DeVaney

August 23, 1926 - March 5, 2010

Evelyn Ramm DeVaney in an undated photograph. Her birth certificate is written in German and states the town as Ruff. However, she said she was born somewhere near Ruff while her mother was working on a harvest crew. She enjoyed the outdoors with her husband, Ken.

Ken and Evelyn DeVaney enjoyed their time together, but most of all during hunting, fishing and camping trips.

The following column appeared in the Columbia Basin Herald on March 11, 2010.

Incredible journey half over  
Evelyn is gone, but the memories continue

By Dennis L. Clay

This is a two-part series about the passing of dear friend, Evelyn DeVaney. Evelyn DeVaney passed away on Friday, March 5 at 4:50 a.m. She was a friend of mine. Her birth certificate is written in German and states the town as Ruff. However, she said she was born somewhere near Ruff while her mother was working on a harvest crew.

She came from strong German-Russian ancestry. Her mother was born in

Russia in 1885 and immigrated to Ritzville when she was 15.

It is interesting how people meet. I have met many friends because of this column and because of my Saturday morning radio show. One man called in to win a prize and we talked for a while on the air. A few weeks later he won another prize and this time I ask if the prize could be delivered. He lives near Krupp and it had been years since I had been to the town. This man is now one of my closest friends.

Evelyn and Kenneth also were frequent listeners to the program. They loved the outdoors. Evelyn often called and we would talk about hunting, fishing, camping and cooking the fish and game brought home.

She talked about canning fish and game, this being one way she would preserve the critters. When smoking and pickling fish was the topic of the show, she would call and describe her method.

Evelyn had been smoking fish for so long, she had gone through several smokers that are available on the market. She said the current one was well seasoned, just as she liked it.

I dropped off some frozen fish one day and Evelyn called the next to let me know a bunch of the fish was already canned. I gave them two batches of frozen deer steaks during a visit. On the next visit she told me they had eaten one package of the steaks for supper the same evening I was there.

“I’m saving the other package for our anniversary,” she told me later.

Needless to say, we became friends and I have learned much more about this couple.

“Ken met Evelyn in Waterville after WWII. She was working at the local dry cleaners and he took in some clothes to be cleaned,” Dorothy DeVaney, Ken and Evelyn’s sister-in-law said.

Kenneth was staying with Dorothy’s folks at the time. Dorothy was staying there, too, until her husband returned from the war three months later. The two families knew each other when they lived in Lake City, Iowa, where Dorothy, Kenny and his brother, Francis went to school together.

“Francis and I were married and then moved to Idaho before the war, as

Francis was in construction,” Dorothy said. “Francis joined the army and I moved to Waterville because my folks were there and they wanted me closer to them.

“Kenny grew up in the outdoors, hunting and fishing and camping. When Kenny and Evelyn were married the four of us did a lot of tent camping. We went to Bonaparte Lake often and many, many other places.

“We went hunting, too, and each of us girls would go in the field with our man, but they were the ones who hunted. I guess Evelyn carried a .22 pistol and would hunt grouse. In the mid-1950s, Evelyn and Kenny moved to Moses Lake and we were all so busy, we didn’t see each other very much, just occasionally.”

Evelyn and Ken would visit during the holidays, but those visits became less frequent when Evelyn’s mother, Anna Marie Ramm, died in 1963.

Kathy Holm, the couple’s next-door neighbor, describes them as the Daniel Boone type.

“Evelyn was passionate about sewing and worked as a seamstress for awhile,” she said. “She would take the feathers from the grouse and use them in her crafts.”

The two of them enjoyed fishing at Banks Lake.

“They would head into the outdoors, hunting, fishing or camping, at least once a week,” Kathy said. “If they could have, they would have gone out every day, rain or shine.

“Kenny would skin and tan the hides of the animals he tagged. His favorite slippers were knitted by Evelyn and the leather for the soles were constructed from the hide of a deer Kenny shot.”

He also made belts, purses and wallets from deer hides.

“When Steven Spielberg was in town for the filming of “Always,” Kenny was a carpenter on the set,” Kathy said. “I heard that Spielberg wanted to find a place to fish and Kenny took him fishing. As a thank you, Spielberg gave Ken the fly rod he used while fishing Rocky Ford Creek.”

In the later years, Evelyn would spend more time at home and Ken seemed to always be gone fishing.

“The two always raised a wonderful garden, where they raised lemon cucumbers, cantaloupes, onions, tomatoes and much, much more,” Kathy said.

Next week: Evelyn’s final journey.