



# Bellevue Church Newsletter

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## Getting to Know You: Marian Forschler

*By Amanda Whiting*



I grew up on a farm in the Spokane Valley, the youngest of three children, a brother and sister. My father ran a dairy and Mother returned to teaching when my brother started school so he could attend an Adventist school.

My parents became Adventists a few years before I was born. They believed strongly in Adventist education, so all three of us attended Adventist schools, in only my case all the way through college.

I was curious, ambitious, adventurous, and artistic. In grade school, I played with the boys and girls. I started my first organization with my best friend, a secret kindness club. I grew up earnestly wishing to be a writer and a missionary. My parents, I think unwittingly, encouraged me to defy the stereotypical male and female expectations. I could wield a hammer and change a tire as easily as cook and manage a household.

Unfortunately, health issues that had nagged me intermittently from early childhood, prevented me from overseas mission work. So, immediately after finishing my BSN, I started work as a public health nurse. After a break due to health issues, I worked at the Penitentiary in Walla Walla, but again I had to resign a job I loved.

I met Kerry Forschler, a Boeing engineer, kind, generous and a deep thinker. We were friends first, and we married in 1973. We lived in Kent briefly, then 18 months in New Mexico. Upon returning, we bought our home in Renton where we lived until 2018 when I had to sell it, and move us into a skilled nursing facility because Kerry had developed Alzheimer's disease and retired—a crushing blow to both of us. Our roles reversed. He'd faithfully, and kindly cared for me due to my multiple autoimmune diseases which gradually rendered me bedfast. Now I

became the caregiver, hiring aides until our savings were exhausted.

I've held no positions at the Bellevue church because by the early 1990s, I rarely got to church, but I was home teaching first one and then two online Sabbath School classes. Through the years I held many church positions—elder, teacher, Bible worker, Personal Ministries, Youth Leader and teacher, New Member Development, Communication Secretary writing articles for the Gleaner, Directing Stop Smoking Programs, Church Newsletter writer and editor for two churches, teaching writing classes at camp meeting, and more. I started an Adventist Writer's Group in the 1990s and it lived many years. Pastor Maylan directed it after I was unable to manage it any longer.

My community work included starting and directing a blood pressure clinic in New Mexico and a Myasthenia Gravis (MG) Chapter. Next I organized and directed, for nearly 30 years, the Pacific NW MG Chapter serving six states officially, including Alaska and Hawaii, plus six more states unofficially because those states lacked chapters. I'd taken writing classes and worked on a Masters in Counseling between the waxing and waning of disabling symptoms. All these skills plus my nursing knowledge worked together to uniquely fit me to manage that organization and to write the helpful newsletter and write for grants, teaching about MG and how to manage around symptoms, and counseling despondent myasthenics.

My hobbies included reading, writing (I've been in print more than 100 times excluding newsletters), teaching writing classes from my home, sewing, crocheting, knitting, oil painting, rubber stamping, cake decorating, cooking and baking—all when I was able. Now my hands shake and my dominant right hand is so contracted that I read, listen and type on my computer connected to the TV in my room. I have a weighted trackball that I use with three fingers on my left hand. I'm very thankful for the abilities I have and the memories of the things I've made and done as well as the people I've helped and am helping. I'm known by the staff for my devotion to our Savior and they come to me with questions. I am content.