

# LOVE

FROM A1

traordinary in 40 years of work in the health care business.

"It was touching," she said. "We're all happy they went together. That's just a nice love story."

The story began in 1945 when Ruben and Betty, both teenagers, met at a school dance in Gresham. They were married the following year and soon settled on a farm north of town.

They raised six children together and managed to make ends meet through hard work on the farm, along with Ruben's salary as a hardware store employee. The couple enjoyed eating at restaurants, entertaining friends and traveling together to farm bureau conventions.

Family members recall house parties where neighbors and friends would gather to play cards and drink Sun Drop soda or beer.

There were tough times, too, including when the family barn burned down on two separate occasions during the 1970s. Through it all, Ruben kept a sense of humor, frequently telling one of the chil-

dren, "Go ask your mother if she still loves me."

"He wanted to hear it all the time," said their daughter, Shelly Bruch.

As the years passed and the family grew, Ruben and Betty became grandparents, great-grandparents and even great-great-grandparents.

Both enjoyed relatively good health until Betty suffered a heart attack in 2014. During her hospitalization, Ruben began to exhibit worsening symptoms of Alzheimer's disease, family members said.

Before long, both were residents at the Atrium Evergreen center, where they played bingo, attended other activities and enjoyed meals together.

"They always did everything together," Buss said.

Their son, Rick Giese, recalled that when his mother's health worsened in recent days, his father sent signals that he had no plans to continue without her. Ruben stopped eating and seemed to will himself to be prepared to follow her when the time came.

"You could just tell — he knew," Rick Giese said. "It's just a connection they had."