By Andrea Stumpf

Stumpf family member

Cat Stevens once said, “I always knew that looking back on my tears would bring me laughter, but I never knew looking back on my laughter would bring me tears.”

And so it is with the loss of Roger Stumpf. The patriarch and laughing storyteller of the Stumpf family passed away on, you guessed it, April Fool’s Day.

Many months have been spent by friends and family reminiscing the stories Roger told about his days with the band, the “romancing” of his one true love, Linda, and the hours he toiled making random truck parts into shiny automotive masterpieces.

While we all remember the stories, they are not the same without the crackling laughter of Roger’s voice adding a few “there and everythings” to emphasize the importance of his points.

While I have been a Stumpf for over 10 years now, I am still learning just how much of an impact Roger had not only on his family, but on the Grant community as a whole. The outpouring of love and warmth that occurred in the days after his passing was hard to take in, but rather easy to understand.

Roger talked to everyone—about everything—and that made each person he spoke to feel like what he or she had to say was important.

So little of this kind of simple compassion happens today. With Roger, it just came naturally.

So, here is my Christmas wish: Take a moment during this busy holiday season to truly listen to the people around you, laugh at the stories that have been told a hundred times and bask in the family that surrounds you.

If you’re lucky enough, you’ll laugh ‘til you cry.