

AVON CALLING ... OR WAS IT MARY KAY OR FULLER BRUSH?

By Cindy Peters

The highlight in my mom's life was when she heard the famous words, "Avon Calling." When I was a child, we did not live close to any stores, so this in-home shopping was a great luxury for my mom. I always liked their deep penetrating hand lotion for the winter months. I played the part of an Avon Lady at a Windsor Garden Play last year. It was great fun and gave me a wealth of memories.

In reality, I never sold Avon, but I did sell Mary Kay products. Avon allowed the salesperson to keep 40% of sales and Mary Kay allowed the salesperson to keep 50% of sales. I already had a full time government job when I sold Mary Kay. I loved the products and I sold a lot. I had hoped I could quit my government job and stay home with my children while I sold Mary Kay. However, like any pyramid scheme it only works well when it is a new company and starting from the ground up. Also, one had to recruit other people to sell to make a larger salary. So, after a few months I quit selling Mary Kay, but I liked their motto: "God first, then family and work last." I still like the Mary Kay products and I use them today.

I also had good luck selling my mother-in-law Mary's homemade jewelry. She made beautiful turquoise and beaded earrings, bracelets, and necklaces. They sold like hotcakes between my two offices. It helped Mary out financially and I gained many of her beautiful pieces of jewelry. Sadly, Mary died five years ago. However, her jewelry is a wonderful keepsake I still have of her.

Years before I met my father-in-law Pete, he sold Fuller Brush in the Midwest. One day Pete drove up to a lovely farm in hopes of selling his products. He unexpectedly met his childhood hero who was dressed in farmer overalls. Pete's hero was famous baseball player Harmon Killebrew, who played 22 years for the Minnesota Twins Major League Baseball Team. At the time of his retirement in 1975 he was the fourth most home run hitter in major league history. In 1967 Killebrew #3 hit the then longest home run recorded at Metropolitan Stadium. He was named his team's most valuable player in 1969.

Killebrew was considered by his teammates to be a quiet, gentle, and kind man. He was a member of The Church of Latter-Day Saints. Because of his religious beliefs he never smoked or drank alcohol. He became a sports announcer after his retirement from baseball. Killebrew was inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame in 1984. I would have liked to have met this baseball hero. Many years later Killebrew lived next door to my cousin's lake front property in Prior Lake, Minnesota. It was only his summer home and the opportunity never arose for me to meet him. Sadly, Killebrew died on May 17, 2011 from esophageal cancer.

My father-in-law did not go into any detail about his conversation with Killebrew. I do know that Killebrew bought out most of the Fuller Brush items in Pete's truck and he did not have to sell much for a long time afterwards.

Whether it was Mary's Jewelry, Avon Calling, Mary Kay or Fuller Brush – it was all great products!