



For Immediate Release:

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America's Biggest Generation Says Goodbye to America's Greatest Generation

Sioux Falls, SD— America's Biggest Generation is losing America's Greatest Generation, and according to the author of *Dear Mom: Remembering, Celebrating, Healing*, they're not sure how to say goodbye.

Many of this country's 73 million baby boomers were raised by stay-at-home moms, a generation of 52 million seniors known as America's Greatest Generation, thanks to Tom Brokaw. Today, baby boomers face the death of parents at a very high rate as boomers rapidly reach the later stages of middle-age themselves.

In particular, baby boomer women in increasing numbers are burying their mothers, and it's a transition that's tough to take, Raap said. "We struggle with saying goodbye to our moms because they were simply always there for us. We are the baby boom generation, America's babies born in celebration of winning WWII. We were doted on, many of us by mothers who were always home," she added.

Many boomer women also became the "sandwich" generation, raising their children while they cared for their parents and worked outside the home. "Baby boomer women are busy juggling life and work. I was too busy to take the time to have the conversations with my mom about her life, to see her life as the gift it was. In my own hectic life as a working mom, I saw her as ordinary—a mom whose entire life was lived in a rural community on the prairie of South

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Dakota. I took her for granted,” she said.

That changed for Raap with the sudden death of her mother, which she shares in her book. Raap weaves together a series of letters to her late mother to tell the story of looking back at life with her mother to find the gifts, lessons and values the author claims as “gold nuggets” of her life. The letters, a form of narrative healing, read like part memoir, part thank you card, and part question and answer: the questions we’d ask a mother if we knew she was dying, Raap said.

“If you lost someone suddenly, what questions would still be in your heart? What would you still want to know?” asks Raap. “Sudden death silences the conversation, but not the need to know. The need to know became my journey, a journey taken by looking back in tears and laughter, at the character, values and lessons of my mom, a woman of the prairie,” she said.

“One of my letters to Mom was about generational strength. I remember watching my grandmother bury two of her children. I remember my mother burying her parents, my aunt burying her husband, my dad burying my mom. People of that generation just seemed stronger than I feel when I deal with loss,” Raap said.

“The sheer size of the baby boom generation meant we got what we wanted,” Raap said. “Markets doted on us. Now we’re facing the loss of the parents that raised us, and we’re finding out the hard way we can’t have our way. We have to say goodbye, and it’s very hard thing to do,” she said.

Letters written to her late mom are shared in her book, ***Dear Mom: Remembering, Celebrating, Healing***, now in its second printing. It is available at local book stores and a sample chapter is on-line at www.DearMomBook.com.

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