

Woodrow Wilson Staheli

By Cody Riddle

My great grandfather Woodrow Wilson Staheli was a hard working man. He was born on May 15, 1913 to Franklin and Paula Reber Staheli. He was the youngest of 12 children. His education ended in the 8th grade. He drove truck and raised garden vegetables and many different seeds. In the 40's and 50's he was in the turkey business and then went on to operate Staheli and Sons Farm. He was always interested in inventions and machinery. He was the Mayor of Washington and took pride in the growth and development of the city.

One story I enjoy hearing about my great grand father Staheli was when he was only 2 ½ years old, his parents worked all night in the Cotton Factory with some of his sisters. It was a cold evening in January. His parents had been gone for about 2 hours and the 2 oldest sisters decided that if they put Woodrow to bed they could leave him with their younger sister Jessie. They could go and help out at the factory so their parents would be home sooner. They put him to bed and left. While Jessie thought Woodrow was sleeping, Woodrow got up and left. He wandered outside and down to the creek. He had been to the Cotton Factory before and thought he knew the way. It was cold and dark and on his way he fell in the creek and got his nightgown caught in some Mesquite brush he couldn't get undone. He was stuck in the dark cold night. After his parents were done working, they started to walk home and on their way home his mother could hear a baby in the distance. They hurried towards it and to their surprise they found their baby boy Woodrow. He was cold and wet from the creek and his nightgown was frozen to his body. They hurried home and got him warm. They still don't know how he got down to the creek and how long he had been there before his mother and dad found him. I am grateful that they found him and he was safe. My Great Grandfather has done a lot for his family and our community. I am proud of him and love him.