Mary Lou Mikel

Mary Lou Mikel, 78, of Bloomington, Ind., formerly of Grinnell, died Tuesday, Oct. 22, 2013, at the home of her daughter in Bloomington.

A funeral service will be held 10:30 a.m., Tuesday, Oct. 29, at First Friends Church in Grinnell. Interment will be at the Chester Cemetery north of Grinnell.

Friends may call at Smith Funeral Home in Grinnell beginning at 2 p.m. on Monday and the family will be present at the funeral home from 6 to 8 p.m. on Monday.

Mary Lou Mikel, 78, of Bloomington, Ind., and formerly of Grinnell, died Tuesday, Oct. 22, 2013, at the home of her daughter in Bloomington.

A funeral service will be held at 10:30 a.m., Tuesday, Oct. 29, at the First Friends Church, south of Grinnell, with the Rev. Keith Morrison, chaplain of Grinnell Regional Hospice, officiating. Plans for the service will be announced by Smith Funeral Home in Grinnell.

Memorials may be directed to the Camp Scholarship Fund of the Grinnell First Friends Church and sent in care of Smith Funeral Home, P.O. Box 368, Grinnell, IA 50112. Online condolences may be sent to www.smithfuneralhomes.com.

Mary Lou was born June 12, 1935, in Marshalltown to Frederick and Besette Gaugh Ebert. She lived with her family in the Gilman and Kellogg areas before settling in Newburg. She played guard on the Newburg basketball team and graduated as valedictorian from Newburg High School with the Class of 1953.

On Sept. 2, 1953, she was united in marriage with Harvey Mikel, who had taken her to church with him. The couple farmed north of Grinnell in Chester Township for over 50 years.

She enjoyed raising a large garden and canning food for the family, sewing their clothes, wood working and living the life of a farm wife.

In later years, the couple hosted students from Mexico and Norway at their home through the Rotary Exchange Program, as their own children were also Rotary exchange students. They hosted international students from Grinnell College, and also enjoyed traveling themselves. She was known as an accomplished baker.

She was a long-time member of the First Friends Church in Grinnell and taught Sunday school for many years. She was also a crafts leader and camp counselor at Camp Quaker Heights, worked as a driver for Diamond Life Home and assisted at the Station Club House in Grinnell. She volunteered as a hospice caregiver and worked in retail at French’s Variety Store. While living in Bloomington, she attended the Clearwater Church with her daughter’s family and she enjoyed continuing her ministry with the children.

Survivors include her children, Linda Hess of Bloomington; Ind., Elaine Joly of Indianapolis, Ind., Martha Mikel Hovig of West Windsor, N.J., and Glen Mikel of Des Moines; 12 grandchildren; two great grandchildren; and two brothers, Frederick H. Ebert of Puyallup, Wash., and Richard Ebert of Grinnell.

She was preceded in death by her parents; her husband; and two grandsons.

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