

Helen Winona Wiese

Helen Wiese, age 87, of Grinnell, died on Friday, December 4, 2015, at the Mayflower Community Health Care Center in Grinnell.

A private family service will be held at a later date. Interment will be at Westfield Cemetery in Grinnell.

Memorial contributions may be designated to the Drake Community Library, mailed in care of the Smith Funeral Home, PO Box 368, Grinnell, Iowa 50112.



Helen Winona Wiese was born to Mike and Betty Davich on August 25, 1928, in Rock Springs, Wyoming. Throughout her early life she grew up in a close-knit family with her parents, older sister Phyllis, and younger brother Michael in Wyoming.

After graduation from high school, she migrated to Omaha, Nebraska, where she met and married her husband, John Richard Wiese shortly after his release from the US Navy. The couple moved to Iowa to help John's mother and father, Emma and Frank Wiese, on the farm during the rough early years of the Great Depression in the United States. From there, Helen and John moved to Davenport, Iowa, where John became a licensed chiropractor and, subsequently, moved to Guttenberg, Iowa, where he practiced for several years while raising their children Karen and Jeff Wiese. While in Guttenberg, they were members of a local Friday night dance group, she was a member of a local Mississippi River ski-jumping club, and they were avid river lovers. They eventually ended up in Grinnell, Iowa, where John returned to farming and Helen joined the Public Relations office of Grinnell College in 1962, working with William Deminoff and Ruth Prescott for many formative years. In 1978, she was appointed Administrative Assistant to College President George Drake. With his retirement, both Helen and John retired to roam the country via various RVs and addresses throughout the western and southern states. Both of her children are graduates of Grinnell College.

Helen is survived by her children, Karen Wiese of Grinnell and Jeff Wiese of Reston, Virginia; four grandchildren, Nicole, Nathan, Harrison and Haley; and her sister's children, Michael, Paul, Thomas and Kathryn who live in Minnesota and Texas. She was preceded in death by her parents; and husband, John Wiese.

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