Hoa My Nguyen, 78, of Grinnell, died Tuesday, Sept. 20, 2016, surrounded by her family at her home.

A Buddhist service was held at 10 a.m., Monday, Sept. 26, at the Smith Funeral Home.

Memorials may be directed to the Hoa Nguyen Memorial Fund and sent in care of the Smith Funeral Home, PO Box 368, Grinnell, Iowa 50112.

Hoa was born in Vietnam on Dec. 14, 1937. She attended school there and was a businesswoman until she met her husband. They married and had 11 children together. After the fall of Saigon, she sought refuge in America for herself and the family, while her husband stayed in Vietnam to fulfill his military duty. Hoa lost all contact with her husband and eventually, she and her children temporarily settled at a military camp in Pennsylvania. Then the First Federal Church and an American family, Ben and Terry Bishop, in Des Moines, kindly and generously sponsored Hoa and her family. Hoa raised her children in the Des Moines, before moving to Grinnell with her daughter.

In her prime years, Hoa would garden, travel and fish, for she enjoyed the outdoors and the company of others. She loved to cook and experiment with recipes. She often put other peoples’ needs before her own, and sacrificed everything to ensure that her family remained safe and nurtured.

Hoa is survived by nine children, Trung Huynh of Dallas, Ga., Keith Huynh of San Jose, Calif., Thanh Huynh of Grinnell, Thuy of Grinnell, Tuin “Tim” Huynh of Acworth, Ga., Tho Huynh of Des Moines, Thong Huynh of Las Vegas, Nev., Thuan Huynh of San Diego, Calif. and Thung Huynh of Iowa City; 27 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her parents and two children, Duong Nguyen and Tan Huynh.