

PCCR Apr 1, 2009

## Ruth E. DeDecker Wright, 89

Ruth E. DeDecker Wright, 89, of Urbandale, died March 21, 2009, at Colonial Manor in Middle Amana.

A memorial service was held at 10 a.m. on Friday, March 27, at St. Bridget Catholic Church in Victor.

Burial, with military rites, was held at 2:30 p.m. on Friday, March 27, at the Rock Island National Cemetery, Rock Island, Ill.

Memorial contributions may be directed to Women in Military Service of America (WIMSA), Dept. 560, Washington, D.C. 20042-0560, or to Essence of Hope Hospice at Colonial Manor.

Ruth was born in Victor on Dec. 19, 1919, the middle sibling of seven children, the daughter of John A. and Elvira Staelens DeDecker. She attended St. John's Parochial School and graduated with honors in 1937. She entered nurses training at St. Thomas Hospital in Nashville, Tenn., and graduated with the class of 1940. In May of 1942, she joined the Navy Nurse Corps. While on assignment in Minneapolis she met Harry A. Wright and was united in marriage on Oct. 1, 1943, in Minneapolis. She was honorably discharged Oct. 11, 1943, and was then employed at St. Mary's Hospital in Minneapolis until she joined the Army Nurse Corps on April 2, 1945.

At the end of World War II, married nurses were the first to be discharged from military service and she moved with her husband to Ann Arbor, Mich. While there, she was employed at both St. Joseph Mercy Hospital and University Medical Center. She later was employed for many years by the late Dr.'s A.C. Furstenberg and J. H. Maxwell, and also now retired, Dr. Frank N. Ritter. Ruth retired in 1980 as office manager for a medical group of internists at St. Joseph Mercy Hospital.

After her husband passed away in 1997, she moved to Urbandale to be closer to her family, after living in Ann Arbor for 53 years. She had been a resident of Colonial Manor since January of this year.

Ruth was a charter member of the Women in the Military Service of America, and was informed, at that time, she was the only nurse registered serving with both the Navy and Army Nurse Corps during World War II. She enjoyed traveling, organ playing, reading, and at times writing poetry.

Survivors include two brothers, James (Marge) DeDecker of Orion, Ill., and Jerry (Joanne) DeDecker of West Des Moines; and one sister, Rosemarie "Rosie" Refer of Victor.

She was preceded in death by her parents; two brothers, John and Francis DeDecker; one sister, Ida Adell Hendrixson; and one brother-in-law, Don Refer.

