

Mary M. Novak



Mary M. Novak, age 94, of Grinnell, died Monday, April 25, 2011, at Grinnell Regional Medical Center.

A celebration of her life was held at 3 p.m. on Thursday, April 28, at the Smith Funeral Home in Grinnell. Interment will be held on Friday, April 29, at Resurrection Cemetery in Chicago, Ill.

Visitation was held Thursday at the funeral home with the family present to greet friends in the afternoon.

Memorials may be designated to the Paralyzed Veterans of America, 804 - 18th Street, Washington, DC 20006-3517. Memories and condolences may be shared with the family on the Smith Funeral Home website at www.smithfh.com.

Mary was born on Dec. 18, 1916, in Unionville, Mo., to Manford and Dona Demry Noel. She was raised in Unionville and she graduated from Unionville High School with the Class of 1934.

Following her education, she worked for the Farmers Savings Bank in Unionville as a secretary. In June of 1939, she moved to Chicago, Ill., and shared an apartment with two young ladies who were also from small towns. Over the years she was employed as a secretary by various companies, the last one being JC Industries, now known as Pepsi Americas. She worked there for 14 years and retired from the business world on March 31, 1985.

Mary met her future husband, Chet W. Novak, when she went with her roommate to the beautiful Trianon Ballroom on the south side of Chicago. They were married a year later on Feb. 1, 1947. They enjoyed coming to

Grinnell to visit Mary's mother and her sister, Thelma and husband Lloyd, and their extended family.

Chet and Mary enjoyed attending the 82nd Airborne Division Association national conventions for many years. Because of her many hours of volunteer work for the association, Mary was awarded a National Honorary Membership and Chet was voted the association's "Man of the Year."

Mary remained in Chicago after Chet died in 1994, until she moved to Grinnell in 2003. Shortly thereafter, she met Connie Goetzinger through her sister Thelma and Mary and Connie became special friends. Mary enjoyed reading, watching TV, visiting with her family and keeping in touch with Chet's family and longtime friends in Illinois.

Mary is survived by several relatives, and was preceded in death by her parents, her husband, and her sister Thelma Minear.

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