

Ila Mae Huyser ^{64-R} 5-11-2020



Ila Mae Huyser, age 93, of Grinnell, died on Thursday, May 7, 2020, at St. Francis Manor in Grinnell.

A private family graveside service will be held on Tuesday, May 12, 2020, at the Sully Cemetery in Sully, Iowa with the Rev. John Epperson officiating.

Memorials may be designated to the St. Francis Manor Foundation to purchase personal protective equipment for their caring nurses and staff and to support the nursing education fund. Memorials may be mailed in care of the Smith Funeral Home, P.O. Box 368, Grinnell, Iowa 50112. Memor

ries and condolences may be shared with Ila Mae's family online at www.smithfh.com.

Ila Mae Baarda Huyser was born on March 10, 1927, the first child of Dick Baarda and Julia Mae (De Prenger) Baarda. She was the oldest of eight children who grew up on a farm five miles east of Grinnell, Iowa. She attended Springhill Country School and graduated from Grinnell High School in 1945. She started her first five years of teaching at the country school in Kilduff, Iowa.

On Thanksgiving Day, November 28, 1946, at her parent's home near Grinnell, Ila Mae was united in marriage with Edward J. Huyser of Sully, Iowa. This union was blessed for 57 years. Together they farmed near Sully and later moved to the Baarda family farm southwest of Grinnell. They had two children, Gordon and Sheryl. After farming for 13 years, they purchased their home on Belmont Drive in Grinnell.

Ila Mae earned a bachelor's degree in Education from Drake University in 1966 and returned to teaching at Bailey Park Elementary School and Grinnell Middle School. Mrs. Huyser is known to many as "their favorite teacher who made school and writing fun." She took pride in teaching her students about the "One Room School House," where she started her teaching career, the Civil War, and pioneer life. Her passion was to teach children to express themselves through creative writing. She retired from teaching in the spring of 1989. Besides teaching in a school setting, she enjoyed working with children in Sunday School, Bible School, and summer camps.

She was a charter member of Grace Community Alliance Church in Grinnell. She was involved in many ministries including teaching Sunday School of various ages, playing the organ, encouraging young women, and supporting missionaries. She will be remembered in many church and community settings for her compassionate willingness to serve others, providing cookies and offering a place around her table for a meal. She volunteered in many organizations throughout the community including Grinnell Hospital Auxiliary and Seeland Park.

Throughout her retirement, she enjoyed traveling with her husband in their motor home or hanging out at Rock Creek with a group of camping friends. She cherished the times they were able to go on tour bus trips around the USA, a trip through Europe where her husband had served in the Army during World War II, and especially visiting her children's families in the Pacific Northwest.

Ila Mae was a 26-year survivor of colon cancer and maintained a positive attitude during her 24-year challenge with Parkinson's disease. She was involved in the Seeland Park Community since 2000. She was a resident of St. Francis Manor the last 6 years of her life. Her family extends great appreciation and gratitude for the excellent care and compassion offered to Ila Mae on a daily basis during her stay in the care facility. She considered the staff of Community Home Health and SFM her friends and part of her extended family. Thank you to each staff member, you are appreciated!!

Left with memories are her son, Gordon (Cynthia) Huyser of Whitehouse, Texas; grandson Robbie Croft Huyser (Jessica) of Mobile, Ala., and children Laura, Titus, Myles and Ivy; daughter Sheryl (Raymond) Sherman of Lake Arrowhead, Calif.; grandsons, Curtis (Debra) Sherman of Los Angeles, Calif., Michael (Marika) Sherman and their son Benjamin of Santa Monica, Calif.; three sisters, Lucille Nikkel, Karma (Donald) Burman, and Karen (Phil) Langstraat; and two sisters-in-law, Judith Baarda and Shirley Baarda; brother-in-law Myron (Nancy) Huyser, Gary (Linda) Huyser, Howard Huyser and sister-in-law Lynda Renaud. She is dearly loved and admired by her many nieces and nephews who remember her as their "favorite auntie" who made them feel very special, encouraged them and gave them a love for learning. She will be remembered by her family, many friends, relatives and neighbors as a compassionate wife, mother, daughter, sister, teacher, neighbor and friend. She was preceded in death by her husband Edward; her parents; her sister Joyce Huizer; her brothers Bruce Baarda and Dean Baarda; her stepfather Leonard Pearce; daughter-in-law Nanci Huyser; and in-laws Gerrit and Helen Huyser, Larry Renaud, and Vernon and Lucille Huyser.