

## Helen Louise Brezina

GHR  
10-22-2020

Helen Louise Brezina, 87, a lifelong Tama County resident, passed away early Monday morning, October 19, 2020, at her daughter and son-in-law's residence in Omaha, Nebraska, where she had been residing since May of this year. A Mass of Christian Burial will be held on Saturday, October 24, 2020, at 10:30 a.m. at St. Patrick Catholic Church in Tama with Father Dennis Conway as celebrant. Interment will follow at St. Patrick's Cemetery in Tama. Visitation will be held Friday, October 23, 2020, from 5 to 7 p.m. at Kruse-Phillips Funeral Home in Tama with a Vigil Service followed by a Rosary at 7 p.m. The family requests masks be worn and social distancing practiced inside the funeral home and church. The Mass may be viewed live on the Kruse-Phillips Funeral Home and Cremation Services Facebook page.



Helen Louise (Boriskey) Brezina was descended from one of the oldest families in America, whose roots go back to at least the early 1630s when her first ancestors arrived in Connecticut from England. She was born August 7, 1933, on a farm southeast of Tama in Potter Township, the fifth of nine children born to Lester Frank and Sarah Jane (Wolcott) Boriskey. She spent her formative years on the farm with her immediate family and graduated from Tama High School in 1951, after which she was employed with the law firm of Willett & Willett as a legal secretary for three years. She also worked at General Telephone in Grinnell for twelve years, after her children had left home.

Helen was united in marriage on April 22, 1954, to Rudolph Richard "Rudy" Brezina Jr. and were married for nearly sixty years until Rudy passed away on March 24, 2014. After marriage the couple immediately began farming southwest of Tama for a few years until they moved to their permanent residence, a 120-acre farm in Highland Township some five miles northeast of Gilman. Most of the crops were corn and soybeans with a significant acreage of hay and moderate amount of oats, and they always raised hogs and usually had a herd of cattle.

They were a typical farm family of their era. Both Helen and Rudy were heavily involved in gardening (a trait that has not been lost on any of their five children). At one point Helen had a large raspberry patch and several miniature plum trees and even succeeded at raising some peaches. The couple sold a significant portion of their fruits and vegetables at the farmers markets for several years and were also involved in birdwatching, hiking, camping, and other outdoor activities.

In addition to being a devoted mother and grandmother to her family, Helen was an outstanding cook. Several of her recipes were very popular with her family and friends, perhaps most notably her Christmas cookies, her apple pies, strawberry jam, tomato juice, and her dill pickle recipe.

Survivors include five children: Barbara Brezina of Omaha, Neb.; Bev (Doug) Hemminger of Omaha, Neb.; Dennis (Deb) Brezina of Maple Grove, Minn.; Tom Brezina of Atlanta, Ga.; and Sandra (Jeff) Jordahl of Omaha, Neb.; eight grandchildren: Jason Hemminger/Emily Hemminger of Omaha, Neb.; Andy Hemminger of Omaha, Neb.; Kelli (Dugan) Flanders of St. Louis Park, Minn.; Nick Brezina of Brooklyn Center, Minn.; Alex Brezina (Calla Price) of Chandler, Ariz.; Alyssa, Sydney and Jacob Jordahl of Omaha, Neb.; one great-grandson, Joshua Hemminger; one brother, Jerry (Sylvia) Boriskey of Montour; and several nieces, nephews, and cousins.

Preceding her in death were her parents; her husband, Rudolph; two brothers, Joe Boriskey and Frank Boriskey; five sisters: Margaret (Boriskey) Brezina, Carole (Boriskey) Dvorak, Fran (Boriskey) White, Emily Jean (Boriskey) Geiger, and Dorothy (Boriskey) Denbow; and several nieces and nephews.

Memorials may be directed to the Alzheimer's Association.