

6 HR, Thursday 02/08/2025

Pearlyn Reitz



Pearlyn Reitz, age 95, formerly of Grinnell, passed away on February 22, 2025, at the Bridges at Ankeny.

A celebration of her life will be held at 11 a.m. on March 15, at Resurrection Lutheran Church, Ankeny.

Pearlyn Reitz was born Jan. 23, 1930, to a Ukrainian immigrant father and second-generation German immigrant mother into the predominantly German-Russian community of Eureka, SD, where they farmed. She began her adult life devoted to serving others as a teacher at a one-room

rural schoolhouse near Eureka, and then at schools in Tulane, SD, and Granite Falls, MN. An intrepid spirit, she then volunteered to serve as a teacher missionary in Papua New Guinea. She met husband Marcus during missionary training and on the ship that took them to PNG. They married in 1956 and had two children in PNG before returning to the US where they had two more children. She and Marcus continued to serve the Lutheran church in Waverly, rural Mitchell, Palmer and Grinnell, Iowa, before retiring to Ankeny in their mid-50s due to Marcus' disability. Pearlyn also worked for the Grinnell middle school and hospital and was activities director for Sunny View Care Center in Ankeny for several years.

Pearlyn loved crafts and gardening and was an avid quilter and seamstress. She was a prolific maker of blankets and relief kits for Lutheran World Relief and maintained a sizable garden. She began every day by singing "Oh let the sun shine in, face it with a grin. Open up your heart and let the sun shine in" while opening her drapes, doing her devotions and singing a few hymns, then sitting on her front porch reading her paper and greeting passersby. She loved teaching crafts to her grandchildren and being active in her church.

True to her heritage, Pearlyn loved her sweets and an occasional beer. Her Kuchen recipes and love of Eureka sausage and Snickers ice-cream bars will be traditions her family will carry on.

Husband Marcus died in 2001. One of six children, only her younger sister Darleen (Portland, OR) survives. She is also survived by four children - Ken, Davidson, NC; Danette, Strongsville, OH; Cindy, Ankeny and Stan, Grinnell), 14 grandchildren, and 10 great-grandchildren. Interment will be at Ankeny Memorial Gardens.

Memorials may be made to Lutheran World Relief (<https://lwr.org/>) or to Seed Savers Exchange in Decorah, IA (seedsavers.org). Condolences may be sent to PO Box 155, Ankeny, IA 50021.