



Elnora Soderquist

August 6, 1918 - June 3, 2013

Elnora Soderquist, 94 Kearney Resident Elnora E. Soderquist, 94 of Kearney died Monday, June 3, 2013 at Mt. Carmel Nursing Home in Kearney. Funeral services will be 10:00 AM, Friday, June 7, 2013 at Zion Chapel at Mosaic-Bethphage Cottage in Axtell. The Revs. Eric Lesher and John Gosswein will officiate. Interment will be in the church cemetery. Visitation will be 5-7pm, Thursday at O'Brien Straatmann Redinger Funeral Home in Kearney and one hour prior to service time at the church. Memorials may be made to Mosaic at Bethphage Village in Axtell or the Music Program of First Lutheran Church, Kearney. On-line condolences may be submitted to osrfh.com. O'Brien Straatmann Redinger Funeral Home of Kearney is in charge of arrangements. Elnora Edna Swanson was born August 6, 1918, in Red Lake County, MN, the second of ten children born to Charlie and Marcia Swanson. The oldest, Leland, died when Elnora was only two years old. She graduated from St. Hilaire High School in 1935, valedictorian of her class, and then worked in the Red Lake County Courthouse as a clerk in the Soil Conservation office. She spent the 1937-38 year as a Freshman at Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, MN, but was unable to continue because of financial worries caused by the Great Depression. She did however attend Humboldt Business College in Minneapolis for a time. While working as a clerk-steno for an insurance firm, she took a Civil Service exam, which resulted in an appointment to the Federal Communications Commission in Washington, DC in February 1941. It was here that she met Ray Soderquist at Augustana Lutheran Church; they

were married there February 27, 1943 in a double wedding ceremony with Ellie's younger sister Beth. Ray opted to accept an assignment to a liaison office in Denver, CO in 1944, so Elnora quit her job moved with him to a tiny house in Colorado. Their three children, Karen, Margaret, and Leland, were born in Denver. Here she was kept busy as mother, seamstress, gardener, and active member of many church and community organizations. In 1955, Ray decided to fulfill a dream by buying and operating a farm in southern Minnesota, so he resigned his job as Director of the Denver Government Printing Office and moved the family to Fillmore County, MN, where they spent seven years. These were challenging but good times. Here Ellie continued previous hobbies and also became involved in 4H leadership, Luther League sponsorship, and other church and community activities. One highlight of those years was playing the title role in a community play, "Aunt Minnie from Minnesota." In 1962, tired of the unpredictability of the weather as it affected farming, Ray accepted an offer to work for the Government again, this time for the USDA in Kansas City, MO. They spent two years here, and then he transferred to the General Services Administration in Denver. While in Kansas City, Ellie had been reinstated in the Civil Service and was working as a legal secretary for the General Counsel's office of the USDA. She was able to transfer from that position to a secretarial position for the GSA in Denver, where she worked until her resignation in 1976. By then, Ray had retired and was building a house in Kearney, Nebraska, moving here in order to have a good, caring, long-term home for Leland at Bethphage in Axtell. Ellie's recent years were spent in Kearney--first at their beautiful home in Cedar Hills, then at the Regency Manor, followed by Northridge Assisted Living and Mt. Carmel Home. Facing broken bones, failing overall health, and Ray's Alzheimer's Disease, Ellie had the courage and wisdom to downsize and redirect their coming days. When macular degeneration began to foreshadow her eventual blindness, she set about learning Braille, making labels that allowed her to continue cooking, baking, entertaining, preserving food from the garden, singing hymns in church, and even serving as Volunteer Coordinator for First

Lutheran Church, using phone, Rolodex, closed-circuit TV, and a very meticulously organized filing system. Ellie was a warm, intelligent, tenacious and resilient woman. She wrote poetry, newsletters, stories, and a complete genealogy with narrative for each of their families. Other pursuits have included field trips to hunt for gems and minerals, lapidary, Elderhostel trips with Ray, crocheting (managed by sense of touch and by counting stitches), and singing. She is survived by her daughters Karen Elizabeth McIntosh of Colorado Springs, CO (husband Tom, grandsons Ben and Nat, and great-grandson Cyrus); Margaret Lynn Strecker of Franklin, TN (husband Richard); sisters Ethel (St. Paul, MN) and Margaret (Brooklyn Park, MN) and brothers Heimer (Owatona, MN) and Charles (Red Lake Falls, MN). She was preceded in death by her husband Ray; sisters Elizabeth, Lois, and Leora; and brother Lester.

Tribute Wall



“ *Elnora Soderquist*

January 28, 2023 at 08:01 AM



“ *Steve & I are the people who now live in that beautiful place @ Cedar Hills. We had the privilege of getting to know Ray & Ellie. What wonderful people. That Ellie was sharp as a tack! Although nearly blind, she knew every plant, flower & green thing growing on this property. She will definitely be missed by friends & family. We feel so lucky to have known her. We. Send our deepest sympathy.*

Emily Eutsler - August 21, 2013 at 05:58 AM