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12/02/2013 - Norma I. Wood - Updated



Funeral services for Norma I. Wood, age 90, of Rapid City, South Dakota will be Monday, December 2, 2013 at 11:00 AM at the Congregational Church in Hemingford with Pastor Jim West officiating.

Burial with Military Honors will be at the Hemingford Cemetery.

Norma Irene (Coplen) Wood was called to Heaven on Tuesday, November 26, 2013, at Rapid City Regional Hospital after a short illness. Norma was ninety years, eleven months, and 3 days old.

Norma was born on December 23, 1922 to Clarence (Kelly) Coplen and Margaret (Krause) Coplen in Edgar, Nebraska. The family moved to Hemingford, Nebraska in the late 1920's. Her father was a rural mail carrier and her mother a house wife and mother to five children. Norma's fond memories were growing up in this rural environment and raising her children. Norma attended all of her school years in Hemingford, Nebraska, graduating in 1940. She continued her education the following year with three college classes for a business degree.

After school she travelled to Washington D.C. and worked as a stenographer in the U.S. Government until the beginning of World War II. Like many young Americans of "The Greatest Generation", she enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps in 1943 stationed at Paris Island, South Carolina and served our Country proudly until 1945, leaving the Marines at the rank of Staff Sargent.

After the war, Norma worked as a stenographer for the C.B. & Q Railroad in Alliance, Nebraska. This is where she met and fell in love with her future husband, David Keith Wood, while he was working as a surveyor for C.B. & Q. They were happily married on September 10, 1947. From this union three children were born, Kelly, Kerry, and Kathy.

During their early married life David and Norma lived in Valparaiso, Indiana where David studied and became a Radio Engineer. Following graduation they lived in Colorado and Wyoming. In 1952 David was called back to duty, serving in the Navy for the duration of the Korean War and continued in the service until retirement.

The following years, Navy life led the family to live in many wonderful places including San Francisco, San Diego,

and Cheyenne, Wyoming. Norma and the children moved to Hemingford, Nebraska in 1964 while David was serving in Vietnam. Norma took a job as Administrative Secretary for the Hemingford Schools. She loved the children and the many tasks with her position and loved living back in her home town with her mother and father. She retired in 1989 from the school system, but not from her beloved home town.

She was very active in both the American Legion and Legion Auxiliary serving as President, Secretary, and Treasurer at various times and donated much of her time to numerous Legion sponsored events while raising her children and instilling her family values. She earned the President's Award for her volunteer work. In addition, she was a member of the 8 and 40 club and did volunteer work for them as well. Norma loved that she was a veteran and was recognized as one of Hemingford's Hero's in the Hemingford ledger. She still received the paper until her death and kept up with all the news from home. Norma was an avid reader, great at solving crossword puzzles, and everyone chose her first to be their partner for trivial pursuit, as she was a formidable opponent. Norma loved her church, and was a lifelong member of the Hemingford Congregational Church.

Norma lived in Hemingford until July of 2011 when she moved to Crawford to be closer to family. In November of 2012 she was admitted to the Veterans hospital in Hot Springs South Dakota. She felt it was best at this time to move to Golden Living- Black Hills in Rapid City, South Dakota. She was a resident there until her passing.

She is preceded in death by her father and mother, sisters Margaret and Doris, and her brother Gene.

Immediate survivors:

Sons: Kelly and Kerry Wood

Daughter: Kathy Whartman

A memorial has been established for the Hemingford Congregational Church or the American Legion Post #9. Donations may be sent to Chamberlain Chapel, PO Box 970, Chadron, NE 69337.

Online condolences can be made at www.chamberlainchapel.com

Chamberlain Chapel of Chadron is in charge of arrangements.