



Wilma Lydia Elsea

October 15, 1918 - November 9, 2010

Wilma Lydia Elsea, died peacefully at her home in Yreka on November 9, 2010, at the age of 92, surrounded by members of her family. She was born October 15, 1918, in Fort Morgan, CO and grew up on a farm near Scotts Bluff, Nebraska. Her parents were German Russian immigrants and was one of eleven children.

At the age of 15, she joined her elder sisters in Lodi, CA, where she worked as a housekeeper. She met her soon-to-be-husband, James Elsea, an agriculture teacher at nearby Linden High School on Easter Sunday, 1939. They fell in love and married 3 months later on August 13, 1939, recently celebrating their 71st anniversary.

Wilma Elsea personified the importance of community volunteer service. From decades of service in the Yreka United Methodist Church to her years as a member of the Fairchild Medical Center Auxiliary and Fairchild Medical Center Guild, she saw what ordinary lay people could do to help others. As a dedicated leader of United Methodist Women, she helped found the ecumenical Church Women United; created the annual Mother/Daughter Banquet at the YUMC; helped organize the local Hot Meals program and cooked a monthly community meal for 22 years. She and Jim devoted 10 years of service to the Mobile Missionary Assistance Program, traveling from Florida to Alaska, from AZ to Baja, Mexico, where they worked in orphanages, Christian schools, dental clinics, soup kitchens—wherever a hammer or meal were needed. One of their ongoing special interests was Shasta Camp, a

United Methodist camp near the city of Mt. Shasta, where they were involved with camping programs and building maintenance for over 40 years. In addition to her volunteer work, Wilma clerked for 28 years at the Tick Tock Shop, JC Penneys, Rascoe's and Thrifty. They loved to travel internationally and went to Israel, Germany, Russia and China.

Wilma is survived by her husband, James Elsea, daughters Dr. Janet Elsea and Rev. Madeline Elsea-Lee, son-in-law, Roderick Lee, and like-a-daughter, Margo Murman. She also leaves her beloved grandchildren, Cyndy and Danielle Elsea, numerous nieces and nephews and hundreds of friends. Her son, Rollie, predeceased her in 2007.

A celebration of her life will be held Sunday, Nov. 14th, 3:00pm at the Yreka United Methodist Church. Internment will be private.

The family wishes to thank the community and her church, her caregivers Bea, Bobbie & Denise, and Madrone Hospice for all the loving care, prayers and expressions of support. We couldn't have done it without you!

Contributions in Wilma's memory may be made to the Shasta Camp Fund Kitchen Fund, c/o 7800 French Creek Rd., Etna CA 96027 or Yreka United Methodist Church, PO Box 760, Yreka CA 96097. Girdner Funeral Chapel is in charge of arrangements.