



Clara Leno

October 10, 1914 - December 9, 2011

Clara Leno, 97, Bismarck, passed away on December 9, 2011, at St. Alexius Medical Center in Bismarck. Cremation has taken place and a celebration of Clara's life will be held on Saturday, May 12, at 10:00 am at Parkway Funeral Service, 2330 Tyler Parkway, Bismarck, with Pastor Rebecca Aardahl officiating, featuring a video of Clara's life, the story of her miraculous Good Friday dream, and recordings of the El Zagal Plainsmen, of which her late husband, Arthur, was a member. Even if you didn't know Clara, but would like to be uplifted and inspired, please attend. You will be welcomed. Fellowship and refreshments will follow the service at her daughter's home at 1201 N. Mandan St, Bismarck. Burial will take place Sunday, May 13, at Hope Cemetery at Burt, ND. Clara was born on October 10, 1914, in New Leipzig, ND, the daughter of Rudolph and Sophia Haupt Bierwagen. She grew up on the family farm north of New Leipzig and attended school in New Leipzig. Her freshman year of high school, she attended Sheyenne River Academy Seventh-Day Adventist in Harvey, ND, returning to New Leipzig for her sophomore year. Due to an ear infection, she did not finish high school, but through the years took correspondence courses. On her 90th birthday, she received an honorary high school diploma. Clara's most memorable farm story was when she was rounding up the cows, lightning struck a nearby rock, sending her running back to the farm, leaving the cows to find their way home. Clara married Arthur Leno on April 28, 1934. They lived for a short time in Valley City before living with Arthur's parents in Burt, ND. They moved to Mott,

and then lived in Hatton, ND for five years, running the local movie theater there. They then moved to Bismarck in the fall of 1954. She worked in Bismarck in catalog sales at Sears and as a sales clerk at Opgrand's Dress Shop. After Arthur's death in 1975, she worked at Country Kitchen and as a maid at Thrifty Scot. Clara was a member of the Eastern Star in Mott and Bismarck, and was a past Grand Matron of the Mott Chapter. Clara was a past member of First Presbyterian Church and Presbyterian Women's Circle. She played the piano and sang, singing duets with her sister, Pauline. Her five daughters all learned to play the piano. Clara enjoyed art, listening to music, and reading and had an extensive library. Her favorite poet was Robert Frost. She did crossword puzzles and took great pride in her garden – from rose-pink peonies to orange day lilies and the planters she filled with petunias. When her grandchildren were younger, those whose families lived far away, received care packages every Christmas – everything from games to crackerjacks. Clara always had a ready hug for anyone who visited. She loved sports, supporting her grandsons at baseball and football games and wrestling matches. She was a fan of the Minnesota Vikings and Minnesota Twins, having met Kirby Puckett and manager Ron Gardenhire. Clara enjoyed watching sports on TV. She could be known for her sense of humor. While sitting next to her youngest daughter on an old rickety piano bench while she was practicing, Clara proceeded to rock the bench back and forth until it collapsed, sending them both to the floor laughing. When Clara was younger, she was a very stylish dresser, wearing hats, shoes, and jewelry to match her outfits. She sold the latest fashions door-to-door in Mott. She learned to cook while preparing meals for farmhands. She made apple pies with homemade crust, apple turnovers, lemon meringue pies, fried chicken, and cheese pockets, was such a good cook, could make anybody enjoy liver and onions. She never got past a Sunday meal without having to put a band-aid on a finger she sliced while making coleslaw. On Good Friday morning in 1976, her daughter Bonnie, having died several months before, Clara dreamed that Bonnie saw her great-grandmother and greeted her even though her great-

grandmother had died many years before she was born and she had never seen a picture of her. Clara took this as a sign from God and once befriended a disheveled man after church service saying "You never know, it could have been Jesus." At the age of 92, she won the "Gorgeous Grandma" contest sponsored by the Mandan News. Clara is survived by her four daughters, Joan Onstad, Bismarck, Carol Dick Althaus, Kalispell, MT, Sylvia MG Olson, Dickinson, and Arta Leno, Bismarck; 12 grandchildren; 24 great-grandchildren; and 4 great-great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her husband of 41 years, Arthur; her daughter, Bonnie Chase; her brothers, Daniel and Reinhold Bierwagen; her sister, Pauline Huber; a sister and brother who died in infancy; and a great-grandson, Morgen Onstad. Memorials may be given to Missouri Slope Lutheran Care Center Activity Department or Central Dakota Humane Society.

Tribute Wall

DW

“ Thoughts and prayers to the family. I wish you all the best.

Dean Weisser - March 17, 2015 at 12:00 AM

JB

“ So sad to hear of your loss. My prayers go out to the Family. I remember living next door to the Leno's back in the 50's, Clara alwas had a beautiful flower garden so sweet. You will be missed..Peace

Joe Boelter - March 17, 2015 at 12:00 AM

CF

“ My family lived next door to Clara and Art on Mandan St. in Bismarck. My brothers and sisters and I were the same ages as the Leno children. Clara and my mother shared the same birthdate. I have many happy memories of Clara and her family. I send you all my condolences.

Carol Boelter Fetch - March 17, 2015 at 12:00 AM