



Mary F. Van Ooyen

January 11, 1928 - August 26, 2017

Mary Francis Van Ooyen, 89, of Oskaloosa, died Saturday, August 26, 2017, at Crystal Heights Care Center in Oskaloosa. The daughter of Andrew and Helen Boston Brower, she was born January 11, 1928, in Mahaska County. She graduated from Oskaloosa High School in 1946, and worked in the business office at the Oskaloosa Herald. On September 19, 1951, she married Peter J. Van Ooyen in Leighton, Iowa.

Following their marriage, she continued to work at the Herald until their daughter, Jeanie, was born in 1964. She stayed home fulltime until Jeanie started kindergarten, and then worked at Mathew Carpet in Oskaloosa before taking a job as a teller at what was then Home Loan Bank (now Great Southern). She greeted everyone who came in the bank by name, welcoming customers with her beautiful smile. Though she retired in 1998, she returned to the bank part-time—she was the only employee there who knew how to balance the books by hand!

Mary was never one to sit idle. She and her husband enjoyed ballroom dancing and bowling. Every few years, they traveled to meet up with the members of his U.S. Army unit, the 8th Field Artillery Observation Battalion. At home, they were proud of their garden, where they grew vegetables including corn, tomatoes, cucumbers, potatoes, and onions. She spent late summer and fall canning and preserving, and made homemade pickles and homemade grape jelly every year. A talented knitter, she enjoyed creating beautiful afghans for family and friends; she also refinished furniture with her daughter and played a mean game of Cards Against Humanity.

Mary was a member of the Central United Methodist Church in Oskaloosa, where she was active in the Friendship Circle of the U.M.W. She believed in giving back, and volunteered at the Mahaska Hospital Gift Shop. She was a member of Beta Sigma Phi, and often served as treasurer for nonprofit organizations due to her skill with numbers. (She insisted on balancing her checkbook to the penny every month.)

Mary was a lifelong cat lover, and her three cats, KC, Cougar and Bebe, were her constant companions. But she was most devoted to her grandchildren, Hannah, 22, and Sam, 19. She mastered Facebook at the age of 82 to keep up with their lives and printed out every photo Jeanie took of them to save at home.

When her grandchildren were little, they knew to expect Mary to arrive with a suitcase of

“surprises,” little gifts she gave each of them for every day of her visit. Every summer, the family gathered at Lake Lida, where they stayed in the same cabin and spent their vacation fishing, swimming, and making memories. When asked, Hannah and Sam always said they would rather go to “Grandma’s Lake” than Disneyworld.

Mary’s family includes her daughter, Jeanie, and her husband, John Crowley of Downers Grove, Illinois; Hannah Crowley and Sam Crowley; and many nieces, nephews, and cousins. She is also survived by the Perdue/Foster clan, her supportive, wonderful neighbors of 60 years and many dear friends. In addition to her husband Pete, Mary was preceded in death by her parents, and two brothers, John Brower and Frank Brower. Funeral services will be held Friday, September 1, 2017 at 10:30 a.m. in the Central United Methodist Church in Oskaloosa, with Reverend Bruce Wittern officiating. Burial will be in the Evergreen Cemetery near Leighton. Visitation will begin Thursday, August 31, after 11:00 a.m. in the Bates Funeral Chapel; the family will be at the funeral chapel from 5:00-7:00 p.m. to greet friends and relatives. Memorials may be made to MHP Hospice Serenity House or Stephen’s Memorial Animal Shelter.

Cemetery	Events		
Evergreen Cemetery Leighton, IA, 50143	SEP	Funeral Service	10:30AM
	1	Central United Methodist Church 201 North Market Street, Oskaloosa, IA, US, 52577	

Comments



“ Mary was a very special person, always so kind and thoughtful. I remember many times my mother and Mary would drive to Cedar Rapids to meet their former roommate and friend Fran for shopping and lunch. I would always join the ladies for lunch, a fun time! While looking at the menu Mary would often comment, "I don't know what to order." Our response, once at the same time, "how about a Reuben?" We all laughed and Mary ordered her usual. You have my deepest sympathy for your loss.

Jill Bainbridge Law

Jill Law - September 01, 2017 at 09:37 AM



“ Basket of Memories was purchased for the family of Mary F. Van Ooyen.



August 31, 2017 at 05:44 PM



“ 111 files added to the album LifeTributes



Bates Funeral Chapel - August 31, 2017 at 09:11 AM



“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Mary F. Van Ooyen.



August 30, 2017 at 05:20 PM



“ Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Mary F. Van Ooyen.



August 29, 2017 at 03:53 PM



“ Oh my I have so many precious memories of Mary. <3 I would spend the night with Jeanie when we were in grade school and Mary would have popcorn and Pepsi for us in those cool colored aluminum glasses that kept your pop so cold! We'd watch some fun shows and then brush our hair and put on jewelry sitting in front of her beautiful 1940's vanity, feeling like such ladies. She'd let us fix cinnamon rolls for breakfast while we looked out at the birds through the big picture window. I let my girls have those same cinnamon rolls because it was a sweet memory for me taking me back to that vintage kitchen! She was very calm as I remember as my little brother put their cat down the register while at Jeanie's birthday party! But Sam was okay and she still let me come back! She was such a sweet quiet presence and I always felt loved and cared for around her! Years later I brought my family to meet Mary and Pete and they pulled out a suitcase full of dress-up clothes for our girls to play in! I think they fell in love with them both that day too! <3 Going to miss this dear lady that I thought of as my other mother. <3 Love you too Jeanie and praying for your family as I'm sure she will be missed greatly.

Allison Westlund Langford - August 29, 2017 at 03:35 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Mary F. Van Ooyen.



August 29, 2017 at 11:15 AM



“ Mary was my coworker at the Whispering Tree Gift Shop
What a lovely lady. I have missed her working with me the last few months. God
bless and keep her family..she loved them so much

Becke Arnold - August 29, 2017 at 10:42 AM



“ So sorry for your loss

Jeff Spain - August 29, 2017 at 01:14 AM



“ Mary was a very kind caring lady. Always eager to help in any way. She was a good
friend and will be missed!



Mary - August 28, 2017 at 05:31 PM