



Ferne Urness

Ferne Arleen (Zastrow) Urness was born March 5, 1923 in Leaf Valley Township, Douglas County, near Garfield, MN. Her parents were Frank and Alvina (Brueske) Zastrow. Ferne's maternal great grandmother, Alvina (Kruse) Schulz, who was eighty-two years old, was the midwife. She was named Ferne because a neighbor, who was a self-made horticulturist, grew all kinds of plants, grafting different species together. He brought over a fern plant to Alvina as a gift, hence the name "Ferne". Ferne attended school at District 100 and graduated from eighth grade at the age of twelve. She attended Central High School where she was very active in music and dramatics, including the Girls' Drum Corps. She graduated in 1941. Ferne went to work for Phil Noonan at North American Creameries as a receptionist and bookkeeper in June 1941. She worked there until November 1942 when she left to go to work for 3M Companies in St. Paul as a Utility clerk. In January 1944, after taking a civil service exam she went to work for Bergstrom Army Airfield in Austin, TX as a private secretary. On June 8, 1944 Ferne was united in marriage to air force Lieutenant Gay V. Urness at Seymour-Johnson Airfield in Goldsboro, NC. In 1959 Ferne was employed as a legal secretary for County Attorney, Keith Davison at Wheaton, MN. She was also a key part of Gay's crop dusting business. After her husband's transfer to Alexandria as Chief Probation & Parole officer in 1966 Ferne worked part time for the Douglas County Attorney's office until she started her own business as a Shaklee Distributor and Sales Supervisor in 1971. She continued in this

business for seventeen years until 1988. Ferne loved music and dancing as well as golfing. She was active a First Lutheran Church; she taught Sunday School and Release Time. She served as the treasurer, vice-president, and president. Ferne was a member of Rainbow Partners, an investment club and General Federation of Women's Club of Alexandria. Later she became an active member of Shalom Lutheran Church. On Thursday, December 13, 2012 Ferne died at the age of eighty-nine years. She was preceded in death by her husband, Gay Urness; her parents; two brothers, Virgil Zastrow and Egner Zastrow; and one sister, Velna Myrvold. Ferne is survived by her children, Rochelle Urness of Pequot Lakes, MN, Gay Urness and wife, Deborah, of St. Louis Park, MN, Sharon Carlson and husband, Mark, of North Bend, WA, Rob Urness of Rosemount, MN and Tammy Urness of Irving, TX; six grandchildren, Zachary and Samuel Urness, Adam and David Carlson, and Andrew and Rebecca Urness; one brother James Zastrow and wife, Mary Ann, of Alexandria; two sisters, Sadie Rosenberger of Bend, OR and Marcella Halverson of Salem, OR; one sister-in-law, Phyllis Zastrow of Alexandria; as well as many nieces, nephews and friends. A funeral service was held Tuesday, December 18, 2012 at Shalom Lutheran Church in Alexandria. Reverend Grant Aaseng officiated. Virginia Hegre and Kim Byrne provided music. Interment followed in Kinkead Cemetery. Casket bearers included Gary Zastrow, Glenn Zastrow, Gregg Zastrow, Gerald Zastrow and Andrew Urness. Arrangements were with the Anderson Funeral Home in Alexandria.