

Phyllis Heller, 73

Sept. 11, 1937 - Nov. 16, 2010

DEFIANCE — Phyllis Ann Heller, daughter of Carl and Irene (Rosman) Wilwerding, was born on September 11, 1937 at Defiance. She was baptized at St. Peter's Catholic Church in Defiance and was confirmed at St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Buck Grove. She attended grade school in the Buck Grove and Defiance area and graduated from Irwin High School with the class of 1955. After high school, Phyllis worked as a home health aid.

December 28, 1957, she was united in marriage to Roger Heller at St. Ann's Catholic Church in Logan. Three children were born to this union, twin daughters, Jannette and Janet and son, Kenneth. After their marriage, Roger and Phyllis made their home at Fort Bliss in Texas where Roger was stationed in the United States Army. After Roger received his honorable discharge, they moved back to the Defiance area where Roger farmed and Phyllis was a homemaker. In 1967, they retired from farming and moved into their present home in Defiance. Phyllis then became employed at Communication Data Services in Harlan. She was a member of St. Peter's Catholic Church and its Altar Society. Phyllis was an avid genealogist and historian for the Defiance area and has completed a book on her family tree dating back from 1745 to the present. She was one of the organizers of the Defiance Sesquicentennial History Book. She helped to research and organize a book containing the history of St. Peter's Catholic Church and Sts. Peter and Paul Cemetery. She has also been instrumental in the restoration of the Old Pioneer Cemeteries in southwest Iowa. Family was important to Phyllis. She enjoyed camping and family events with her children and grandchildren. Roger and Phyllis were blessed to observe their fiftieth wedding anniversary in December of 2007. After she retired from CDS in 1999, Phyllis continued her work in genealogy and enjoyed life with her family. Phyllis died on November 16, 2010 at Myrtue Medical Center in Harlan having attained the age of seventy-three years, two months and five days.

In addition to her parents, Phyllis was preceded in death by an infant sister, Maxine. Survivors include her husband Roger Heller of Defiance; her children: Jannette and her husband Bob Bogler of Harlan; Janet and her husband Jeff Theulen of Defiance; and Kenneth Heller and his wife Christiane, of Killeen, TX; seven grandchildren: Kim and her husband Andy Zahn, Stacy Theulen and her fiancé Ray Wellman, Todd Theulen, Kyle Bogler, Brett Bogler, Cory Bogler and Sina Heller; her siblings: Richard Wilwerding and his wife Shirley of Harlan; Ivo Wilwerding and his wife Darlene of Westphalia; Norma and her husband Marvin Jablonski of Omaha NE; Jolene and her husband Ed Blum of Panama; Duane "Bud" Wilwerding and his wife Sandy of Omaha; Judy and her husband John Thraen of Earling; Jane Wilwerding of St. Louis, MO, Carol and her husband Don Eagle of Dallas, TX, and Larry Wilwerding and his wife Sharon of Omaha; nieces and nephews; other relatives and many friends.

Rev. Chris Fontanini and Rev. Glen Wilwerding celebrated a Mass of Christian Burial on Saturday, November 20, 2010 at 10:30 a.m. at St. Peter's Catholic Church in Defiance. Interment was held in Sts. Peter & Paul Cemetery in Defiance with Andy Zahn, Todd Theulen, Kyle Bogler, Brett Bogler, Ray Wellman, and Cory Bogler serving as casket bearers.



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