

## Irene Huebner, 97 ✓

Aug. 30, 1918 - Nov. 27, 2015

**PANAMA** — Irene Elizabeth Huebner was born to Barbara (Kengel) and George (Shorty) Wegner in Panama, on August 30, 1918. She was baptized and confirmed at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Panama. She grew up along the railroad tracks with her siblings Orvelyn and Herb, and recalled how her mother cooked for the hobos from the train. Irene surely carried on that tradition, as cooking for all was her delight and many good dishes she did make.

Irene met William Huebner, the love of her life, at a dance and they married on November 16, 1939.

They were hailed out their first year of farming but had each other and that is what really counted. Three daughters were born to make their family: Beverly, Shirley, and Lin.

Her husband, Bill, died of a heart attack on July 3, 1961. Irene carried on raising her girls alone. They continued to milk cows and raise chickens. Irene was a gifted seamstress and sewed clothes for her family as well as others. In July of 1969, she and Lin moved to Harlan where she worked at Harlan Clothing doing alterations for many years.

Her activities included always being of service to her church. She and Orvie decorated the new rectory in Panama in the 1960's, making curtains and preparing it for the new clergy. She was a member of the West Side Social Club and loved having dinner parties and card parties for many of her family and friends. All of the pastors in Harlan knew where to go when a project with sewing was needed. She was well known throughout the county for her sewing abilities. She could fix anything from hemming pants to altering wedding and formal dresses. It was during these interactions that Irene would love to visit and learn about the people that visited her home.

Irene was blessed with twelve grandchildren and thirty great-grandchildren and cherished the holiday celebrations on the long table in the basement of her home that at times hosted fifty people. Babies and little ones always lit up her eyes and warmed her heart. She enjoyed welcoming all the additions who came through the years and filling their bellies along the way. Irene died on Friday, November 27, 2015 at Elm Crest Retirement Home at the age of ninety-seven years, two months, and twenty-eight days.

Irene was preceded in death by her parents, husband, sister Orvie Bruck, brother Herb Wegner, and sons-in-law Ken Brinker and Gary Kohles. She is survived by her daughters: Lin Brinker of Harlan, Shirley and her husband Bud Chamberlain of Panama, and Bev Kohles of Portsmouth; twelve grandchildren; thirty great-grandchildren; other family members and friends.

Rev. John Frost celebrated the 11:00 a.m. Mass of Christian Burial on Tuesday, December 1, 2015 at St. Michael's Catholic Church in Harlan. Kate Kohorst accompanied vocalist Irelynn McMurphy. Serving as casket bearers were Irene's grandchildren: Lisa Schomers, Lori Mills, Mary Jo Schaben, Marvin Kohles, Lois Kramer, Cindy Dotzler, Lea Larson, Jim Chamberlain, Gina Chamberlain, Cory Brinker, Tricia Swenson, and Ann Schwieso. Burial was held at St. Mary's Cemetery in Panama.



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