

## Vera D. Thummel, 86

*Dec. 4, 1913 – Sept. 22, 2000 ✓*

**HARLAN** – Vera Dorothy Current was born Dec. 4, 1913, to Emma (Schultz) and Leigh Current near Webb. She was a high school track star and, later, a Cornell College field hockey hall of famer. She worked to put herself through college, first at Cornell and then at the University of Iowa, where she was active in theater and speech events, hosting her own weekly radio show. She graduated from the University of Iowa in 1937, and then spent several years teaching high school speech and English.

July 27, 1941, Vera married Glenn Frank Thummel in Webb, and moved several times as his military service and work took them to Massachusetts, Kansas and finally back to Iowa. In 1956, They settled permanently in Harlan, where they raised their three children. In 1962, she returned to teaching, acting as speech teacher for Harlan High School until a series of health problems forced her decision to retire. In 1971, the local Future Farmers of America chapter named her the first female "Honorary Farmer of the Year". In her spare time, she served in the Methodist Church as Sunday School teacher and choir member, often singing as a soloist. She was active in the Community Chorus and the Community Theater and was a longtime member of the Harlan Literary Club. An accomplished amateur oil painter, she created murals for the Heritage Trails Museum in Harlan. She was also, throughout her lifetime, a writer whose poems and stories were published in anthologies and a major magazine. She wrote the script for Harlan's Centennial celebration and for eight years wrote a bi-weekly column for a Harlan newspaper. In their seventies, Vera and her former college roommate returned to the University of Iowa campus several times to participate in Elderhostel writing programs. In later years, Vera and Glenn traveled frequently. Sept. 22, 2000, she died at Elm Crest Retirement Community at age 86 years, nine months and 18 days. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband, Glenn; sister, Cleo; and brother, Merle. She is survived by her children, Craig Thummel (Mary Ann) of Houston, TX; Ann Paulk (Steven) Bigler of Waterloo; Kristen Plank (Joe) of Mason City; grandchildren, Nikki Thummel of Des Moines; Meghan Paulk of Nashville, TN; Charlie Paulk and Allison Paulk of Iowa City; Marin Plank of Monterey, CA and Ben Plank of Iowa City; one brother, Duane Current of Clearwater, FL; and other relatives.

A memorial service was held Sept. 28, 2000, at United Methodist Church in Harlan, with Rev. Paul Wilcox officiating. Pauley Funeral Home in charge of arrangements.