

## Esther Heft, 92

Feb. 16, 1917 - Sept. 17, 2009

**AVOCA** — Esther Idanna Heft, the daughter of William and Emma (Andresen) Maassen, was born on February 16, 1917, on the family farm located south of Avoca. She was baptized and confirmed at the First Lutheran Church in Avoca. Esther attended Valley #2 Country School, and graduated from Avoca High School in 1933.

March 10, 1937, Esther married Harris James Heft in Avoca. The couple farmed east of Hancock, where they enjoyed all aspects of farming life, especially working cattle and doing vegetable and flower gardening. Esther established a babysitting service and

cared for many ill people over the years. Harris and Esther moved to Avoca in the fall of 1999. In recent years, Esther had resided at the Avoca Nursing and Rehab Center. Esther was a member of Trinity Lutheran Church in Avoca, where she taught Sunday School for more than 60 years; she was also active in the women's circle and held office with the Lutheran Church Women. She enjoyed baking, quilting, crocheting, sewing, oil painting, and sketching pictures on family greeting cards. Esther I. Heft died on Thursday, September 17, 2009, at the Avoca Nursing and Rehab Center in Avoca, at the age of 92 years, 7 months, and 1 day.

Esther was preceded in death by her parents; her husband, Harris J. Heft, on June 4, 2006; one sister, and three brothers. She is survived by three daughters, Julianne (Roger) Thompson of McAllen, TX, Janiece Schroder (friend, Ron Hering) of Oakland, and Carolyn (Henry) Stelling of Plainview, MN; six grandchildren, Dale (Connie) Schroder of Avoca, Shari Schroder of Valencia, CA, Sonia (Steve) Shepherd of Pharr, TX, Lori (Michael) Hritz of Austin, TX, Brent (Tricia) Stelling of Millville, MN, and Chris Stelling of Minneapolis, MN; four great-grandchildren, Jenna Schroder, Devin Schroder, and Katelin Schroder, all of Avoca, and Sophia Stelling of Millville, MN; and other relatives and friends.

Funeral services were held on Monday, September 21, 2009, at the Trinity Lutheran Church in Avoca, with Pastor Nancy Ross-Hullinger of the United Church of Avoca officiating. Honorary casket bearers were all children for whom Esther babysat, including Harder, Burmeister, and Rold families, Mike Ohm, and Noah McCutchen. Active casket bearers were Dale Schroder, Lori Hritz, Chris Stelling, Sonia Shepherd, Brent Stelling, and Shari Schroder. Burial was in the Oak Hill Cemetery in Hancock. Condolences may be left online at [www.burmeisterjohannsen.com](http://www.burmeisterjohannsen.com).



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