

## Helen Merritt, 73

*Oct. 13, 1933 - Aug. 23, 2007*

**HARLAN** - Helen Colleen Merritt, the daughter of Bertram and Thelma (Monson) Olson, was born Oct. 13, 1933, in Walnut. She attended country school east of Irwin, and graduated from Irwin High School in 1951. After attending Iowa State Teacher's College in Cedar Falls, Helen taught in Kirkman, for a year.

May 23, 1954, Helen married Thomas Oliver Merritt at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Irwin. The couple lived in Omaha, NE, where Helen taught school until 1956. From 1956-59, they lived in San Jose, CA, where she worked at Sears. Tom and Helen moved back to Iowa in 1959; they moved to Harlan in 1961. In Harlan, Helen taught at the elementary level for 30 years. She retired in 1995. In 2003, she became a resident of Elm Crest Retirement Community. She died Aug. 23, 2007, at the Elm Crest Retirement Community in Harlan, at age 73 years, 10 months, and 10 days.

Helen was preceded in death by her father, and three brothers, Clyde Olson, Duane Olson, and Steve Olson. She is survived by her husband, Tom Merritt of Harlan; her mother, Thelma Olson of Harlan; two sons, Curtis Merritt of Columbus, NE, and Kevin Merritt of San Antonio, TX; one daughter, Lana Merritt of Harlan; three brothers, Dean (Joyce) Olson of Minden; Alan Olson of Le Mars; and Dave Olson of Lake Park; two sisters, Cherrie Wiese of Topeka, KS, and Wanda (Ron) Sabby of Wallingford; one sister-in-law, Sue Olson of Sioux City; three grandchildren, Faith Peterson, Drew Peterson, and Megan Merritt; and other relatives.

Funeral services were held Aug. 27, 2007, at the Burmeister-Johannsen Funeral Home with Pastor Ron Rasmussen of St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Irwin, officiating. Casket bearers were Chris Thoms, Donnie Jacobsen, John Heller, Drew Peterson, Gale Rihner, and Gene Dollen. Burial was in the Rose Hill Cemetery in Kirkman.

