

Virginia Nielsen, 82 ✓

Feb. 23, 1924 - Aug. 7, 2006

ELK HORN — Ydun Virginia Jensen Nielsen was born Feb. 23, 1924, in Kimballton, to Kirstine Simonsen Jensen and Thorvald George Jensen. She had seven brothers and sisters and was the seventh child in the family. She was baptized March 30, 1924 and confirmed May 15, 1938 at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Kimballton. She attended school through tenth grade in Kimballton and attended Audubon High School for her junior and senior years, graduating as valedictorian of her class in 1941. She attended Grand View College in Des Moines, where she met her future husband, W. Clayton Nielsen of Lake Benton, MN. After one year at Grand View, she attended and earned her B.A. in 1945 from the University of Northern Iowa (then Iowa State Teachers College) in Cedar Falls, and then taught English and Speech at Glidden High School for two years.

June 27, 1947, Virginia and Clayton were married at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Kimballton. Thereafter she joined Clayton, a Lutheran pastor, in his parish in Denmark, KS. She served as his helpmate there and in all subsequent parishes (in Withee, WI; Omaha, NE; and Axtell, NE). They raised two sons and one daughter. She taught school in various capacities wherever they lived: elementary school in Denmark, KS; high school in Withee-Owen, WI; television writing and other TV courses in Omaha, NE; and college extension courses in Axtell, NE. While teaching in the Omaha Public Schools, she wrote two textbooks for her courses in television production. She was greatly loved by her students for her sincere caring and her energetic, dynamic teaching style. In every community in which she lived, Virginia was actively involved. She represented her church on national, state, and district boards as a member and officer; served on the Board of Directors of the Danish Immigrant Museum; and participated in such groups as Danish Brotherhood, Kimballton Folk Dancers, Community Heritage Society, Progressive Danes, Lutheran Church Women and Bible Study groups. Upon retirement in 1988, Virginia and Clayton moved to Kimballton and later to Elk Horn. They spent their winters in Solvang, CA and the rest of the year in Iowa. She died peacefully after multiple strokes Aug. 7, 2006, at age 82 years, five months and 14 days.

Virginia was preceded in death by her parents; her brothers and sisters and their spouses, Erling and Rose Jensen, Amanda and Niels Boelth, Evald and Elna Jensen, Selma and Vernon Larsen, Bernhardt and Margie Jensen and Olivia Hoegh. She is survived by her husband of 59 years, Pastor W. Clayton Nielsen of Elk Horn; sons, Warren (Erin) Nielsen of Fremont, CA and Lance (Wende) Nielsen of Boise, ID; and daughter, Melanie Phoenix and partner Terry Robinson of Santa Rosa, CA; seven grandchildren, Chad (Jane) Nielsen, Joy Nielsen, Ross Nielsen, Sarah Nielsen, Ashley Nielsen, Kirstin Nielsen and Rachel Nielsen; five great-grandchildren; brother, Gerald Jensen of Pleasant Hill; brothers-in-law, Everett (Marylin) Nielsen of Fallbrook, CA and Harold Hoegh (Lorraine) of Exira; nieces, nephews and cousins.

Funeral services were held Aug. 14, 2006, at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Kimballton, with Pastor Tony D. Ede officiating. Casket bearers were nephews, Bruce Hoegh, Winston Hoegh, Mark Larsen, Paul Larsen, Jeff Rasmussen and Kurt Rasmussen. Kessler Funeral Home in Audubon in charge of arrangements.