



Irene Virginia Van Winkle, 83, of Bellevue, Nebraska, formerly of Burwell, died at her home on August 20, 2016.

Funeral services will be 3:00 p.m. Saturday, August 27, 2016 at the United Methodist Church in Burwell. Burial will be in Cottonwood Cemetery in Burwell. Pastor Dennis Davenport will officiate. Visitation will be Friday from 5 – 7 p.m. at the United Methodist Church. Irene's wishes for memorials were to support your local church by "doubling-up" your weekly offering next Sunday or making a contribution to an organization that supports childrens' education.

Irene was born February 25, 1933 in Howard County to James and Margaret (Walkowiak) Svoboda, Sr. She graduated from Ord High School in 1950. After graduation she taught in country schools. On October 18, 1953 she married Jerry Van Winkle. They moved to Colorado where she worked for Frontier Airlines. In 1957 they moved to Long Pine, Nebraska where they worked on a ranch for a couple of years, before moving to Ord, where she taught at country schools. They then moved to Kearney, Nebraska where Irene taught at Amherst. While in Kearney, she received her degree from Kearney State College. They moved to Bridgeport in 1966 where she taught until 1973, when Jerry's job took them to Central City. She taught one year at Hampton and then in Central City for 21 years. She retired in 1995 after a 41 year career. During this time, she received her Masters Degree from Wayne State College. Irene was passionate about teaching and cared greatly about her students. She enjoyed following her students even after they left her classroom. Throughout her teaching career, she served on many NSEA committees to further school curriculum and education of children.

She moved to Omaha in 1997 to be closer to her children and Jerry moved to the Omaha VA Nursing Home. Jerry died on January 7, 1998. She moved back to Burwell in 2005 to care for her parents. After her parents' death, she maintained her home in Burwell until her health started to fail. She was hospitalized in December 2015 and shortly thereafter moved to Bellevue to be near her children.

She loved to read, sew, quilt, play Bingo, Scrabble and Quiddler. She was always ready for a visit with friends or family. Irene and Jerry had a strong faith in God and were very involved in all of the Presbyterian churches that they attended throughout their marriage. They enjoyed camping and were active in a camping club. She and Jerry were very active in Mariners and traveled together to many National Mariner Conventions. After Irene returned to Burwell, she joined the United Methodist Church and she was an active member of the United Methodist Women. She was very involved in FCE, Quilt Guild and served on the Garfield County Library Board. She loved to care for others and had been blessed with her own good health until December 2015. She then had to finally let others care for her.

Irene is survived by two children, Doug and Adrienne Van Winkle of Omaha, Nebraska and Lisa and Tracy Hilder of Red Oak, Iowa. Five grandsons, Ryan and Jackie Van Winkle, Kevin and Liz Van Winkle, Scott Van Winkle and fiancée Margaret Conzett, Matt Hilder and fiancée Tanya Gray, and Mitch Hilder. Three great-grandchildren, Lucas, Drew and Ellie Van Winkle. Nine siblings, Jim and Marilyn Svoboda of Ord, Nebraska, Dale Svoboda of Burwell, Nebraska, Margie Mayberry of Normal, Illinois, Jeanie and Lyle Lemmer of Atkinson, Nebraska, Toots and Buzz Tollman of Marsland, Nebraska, Kathaleen Mead of Burwell, Nebraska, Marylyn and Dave Scharton of St. Paul, Nebraska, Alan and Linda Svoboda of Holdrege, Nebraska and Linda and Gene Thoene of Burwell, Nebraska. Brother-in-law Gene and Karen Van Winkle, Vancleve, Mississippi, and Sister-in-law Pat Van Winkle of Ord, Nebraska.

Irene was preceded in death by her parents, her husband, Jerry and a brother, Tony.