

Laura Ann Esser

Alma Center, WI

Laura Ann Esser, 81, of Alma Center, WI, passed away Wednesday, January 15, 2014, at her home, while under the care of Black River Memorial Hospice.

Laura was born on December 3, 1932 to Herman and Agnes (Sichler) Hart while they lived on a farm in the Township of Avon. She grew up with three brothers and four sisters, all of whom preceded her in death, except Cecilia, who lives in Sparta. During her formative years, her family lived on the Mayo Farm (currently the Roy Pokorny Farm). Her grade school years took place in the Rural Pomeroy School where she enjoyed math and science. The Herman Hart family then moved to the Sichler Home farm and Laura completed her grade schooling in the Judkins School in Garden Valley and high school at the newly-formed Lincoln High School (combination of Alma Center, Merrilan, and Humbird high schools), in 1950, where she became well-versed in accounting and nursing through experiential learning. Some of her hobbies included sewing, roller-skating, dancing, singing, and playing cards. She married Claire Esser on February 4, 1950, and raised six children on the John Esser farm in Garden Valley. Laura was a dedicated homemaker, fabulous chef, loving and caring wife and mother. She had the gentlest of mannerisms when raising her children, doting on them and providing for them through many years of hardships and joys. Laura was an active member of the Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Alma Center, where she taught CCD for twelve years. In addition she supported the Altar Society in providing luncheons for funerals and anniversary gatherings. As a thirty-eight year member of Catholic Family Life Insurance, holding offices as secretary/treasurer, she assisted with giving contributions to charitable causes. Claire and Laura were members of a unique group of married couples that were known as the "anniversary club" to those who were in its membership since their wedding days in 1950 and 1951 – Teresa and Bruce Spiegel, John (deceased) and Leona Larson, Bernard (deceased) and Dorothy Laufenberg, Roy (deceased) and Dolores Pokorny, Helen and Edmund Statz (both deceased).

Laura is survived by Claire, the love of her life, this past year celebrating 63 years of wedded bliss, and five of her six children: Rose Terrell (Dale) of Colorado, Marie Benedict (Jon) of Taylor, Mike Esser (Joan) of Merrilan, John Esser of Alma Center, and George Esser (Kathy) of Alma Center. Fifteen grandchildren also mourn her passing: David and Christina Terrell, Eric, Paul, and Jason Benedict, Tony, Matt, and Scott Esser, Lisa Spegman, Steve and Greg Esser, Nicole Uecker, Lucas Esser, Caitlin Goodbear, and Jacob Esser. Fourteen great-grandchildren who also will miss her are: David Terrell, Jr. and Adrian Terrell-Gilmore, Abigail and Eliza Esser, Conner, Corah, and Calvin Esser, Easton and Emerie Esser, Madelyn Spegman, Francesco, Dominic, and Matteo Uecker, and Arlo Goodbear.

Laura was preceded in death by her firstborn son, Gerald. Many nieces and nephews continue to hold her in high esteem, as well as brother-in-law James Esser and sisters-in-law Ruth Esser, Caroline Hart, and sister Cecilia Jacobson.

A Mass of Christian burial will be held Saturday, January 18, 2014, 10:30 a.m., at Immaculate Conception Catholic Church, Alma Center. Burial will follow in St. Mary's Catholic Cemetery, Alma Center.

Family and friends are invited for visitation Friday, January 17, 2014, from 5:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m., at Jensen-Modjeski Funeral Home, Hixton, WI.

Family and friends are also invited for visitation Saturday, from 9:30 a.m. until the time of mass at the church.

Jensen-Modjeski Funeral Home of Hixton is assisting the family with arrangements.

Online condolences are available at [www.jensenmodjeskifuneralhome.com](http://www.jensenmodjeskifuneralhome.com).