

Ballman, Leona P.

Leona Peppel Ballman, 89, of Port Hope passed away Tuesday, March 18, 2008 at Baylor University Medical Center of Dallas, Texas.

She was born July 12, 1918 to the late Ernst and Frieda (Rathje) Fluegge in Oliver Township. About half a year later they bought and moved to a farm in Chandler Township, which is still in the family today.

Leona was baptized, confirmed and married in St. John's Lutheran Church of Berne. She went to the Soule School through the eighth grade, graduated from the Elkton High School in 1936, then attended Central Teacher's College for two years to get a limited certificate to teach for 10 years in the rural schools. She taught at Robinson School for seven years, Lawitzke School for one year, at the Red School for two years, all in the Port Hope area.

During that time on Aug. 24, 1940 she married Edward Peppel of Port Hope and lived on the Peppel Farm. Then they joined the St. John's Lutheran Church of Port Hope.

They had three children, Robert, born on Jan. 9, 1944, Donald, born on Jan. 9, 1949, and Dale born on March 19, 1952.

In 1957 she began teaching again third and fourth grades at the Port Hope Community School where she taught for 16 years. Leona continued her education and received her B.S. degree at Central Michigan University in 1959, taking more courses for a permanent certificate.

In 1973, Leona changed from teaching third and fourth grades to teaching kindergarten, reading readiness, seventh and eight grade literature, and title I reading and math in the afternoons at St. John's and the following rural schools: Red, Eccles, Adams, Verona, Rapson, Church, Big Burning, Jericho, and Becking. The latter two closed after a couple of years.

Leona taught for 40 years, retired in 1983, but a substitute teacher until 1987. In 1967, Leona and Edward's son, Robert, died after an accident while coming home from Michigan State University, and two years later, her husband Edward died of a heart attack.

On Aug. 9, 1986 Leona married Kurt C. Ballman of Detroit at the Port Hope St. John Lutheran Church by the Rev. Albert Bahr. They spent their winters in New Port Richey, Fla. and summers at the Peppel farm near Port Hope. Kurt died of illness in 1999. Leona had been a 4-H leader for 28 years, first at the Busy Bloomfield Club, and next the Port Hope Lightning Bugs Club, she taught summer schools, Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, enjoyed playing cards, and above all loved God.

She was a member of MARSF, MEA Retired, Florida GM Retirees, Port Hope Retirees Club, Port Hope Homemakers, and the Grindstone-Port Hope Sportman's Club.

Leona is survived by two sons, Donald Peppel of Rockwell, Texas, Dale Peppel and his wife, Kate, of Rochester, Bonnie Peppel of Garland, Texas; four grandchildren, Justin Peppel, Julie (Raun) Flores, Adam (Carolina) Peppel, and Jason Peppel; seven great-grandchildren, Kevin, Lerin, Chyrstine, Luke, twins Joseph and Nicholas and Dominic; one sister, Alma Stahl of Bay Port; sister-in-law, Vida Fluegge of Cass City; several nieces and nephews and cousins, especially the Woodke's and many friends. The step-family survivors are one son, Kurt (Marlene) Ballman of Rodney; daughter, Karen (Dennis) Parent of Harrisburg Township; daughter-in-law, Judi Ballman of Aurora, Colo.; seven grandchildren, Debbie (Steve) Walsh, Kurt J. Ballman, Keith (Kris) Ballman, John (Debbie) Ballman, Todd (Cheryl) Ballman, Donna (Steve) Calk, Alan (Kelly) Parent; and 13 great-grandchildren; and sister, Ruth Erning.

Preceding her in death were her two husbands, Edward Peppel in 1969 and Kurt Ballman in 1999; son, Robert Peppel in 1967; sister, Donna Molinaro in 1995; brother, Herbert Fluegge in 2006; three brothers-in-law, James Stahl in 1973, Richard Molinaro in 1996, Alfred Woodke; and sister-in-law, Martha Woodke. Funeral services for Leona will be at noon on Monday, March 24, 2008 at the St. John Lutheran Church of Port Hope with the Rev. Greg Eilers officiating. Burial to follow in the Lakeview Cemetery.

Visitation will be from 7 to 9 p.m. on Friday and from 1 to 9 p.m. on Saturday in the Ramsey Funeral Home, Harbor Beach and from 11 a.m. until the time of services on Monday in the church. A scripture service will be conducted at 7 p.m. on Saturday evening in the funeral home.