

## Elsie Hartmann Becker

June 10, 1922 - July 26, 2024

Elsie Hartmann Becker passed away peacefully at the age of 102 on July 26, 2024, in Fort Collins. In more than a century of life, she lived through and witnessed more than most ever will and remained sharp as a tack to the very end.

Born on June 10, 1922 to Rudolph and Gertrude Browner, she grew up on a farm outside of the bustling metropolis of Norfolk, Nebraska (population: 8,634 at the time of her birth). The second oldest of seven girls, Elsie and her sisters did not escape the hard work necessary to run a fruit-and-vegetable farm. All seven sisters worked the fields and helped harvest the watermelon, cantaloupe, and other commodities that the family sold at a produce stand in town.

Elsie vowed to herself that she would never live on a farm again or marry a farmer, and moved to Junction City, Kansas after high school. She was thrilled upon learning that a soldier she had met from nearby Ft. Riley, Kansas by the name of Erich Hartmann had no aspirations to farm or otherwise build a career in agriculture, and the two were married on August 2, 1942.

Elsie and Erich briefly moved to Alliance, Nebraska where Erich narrowly escaped deployment to Japan when the war ended, after which the couple relocated to Lincoln where Erich worked in the Post Office. The couple had three children, Alfred, Ronald, and Audrey, and upon moving to an acreage outside of the city, ran a boarding kennel for dogs out of their home. At times, they housed more than 20 dogs, in addition to their own menagerie of about a dozen dachshunds, Irish setters, and poodles.

Elsie taught herself to trim poodles as a side business, and as her and Erich's interest in dogs grew, they became involved in dog shows, both showing their own dogs and judging shows around the Midwest. They raised and showed a number of AKC champions, including Irish setters and dachshunds.

Elsie and Erich retired to Bella Vista, Arkansas in 1975, and became avid RV travelers. They also discovered a knack for round and square dancing, and took part in an active round- and square-dancing social scene. Elsie had an enviable stock of elaborate square-dancing dresses, many of which she sewed herself.

Erich died in 1982 of heart disease. Ever resourceful, Elsie picked up and went back to work to support herself after his passing. Some years later, she met and fell in love with Irvin Becker and the two were married in 1986.

Elsie's marriage to Irv opened up a whole new chapter of her life. The pair had a very active social life and traveled extensively, taking part in missionary trips to help build schools in underserved regions such as Jamaica, as well as taking several

cruises to all corners of the world, including Alaska, Scandinavia, Panama, and elsewhere. One memorable trip took them on a World War II reunion tour to visit all the locations in Germany, France, and Belgium where Irv had served during the war.

After Irv died in 1997, Elsie moved into a senior living facility in Bella Vista. At the spry age of 95, she decided to move to Fort Collins in 2017 to be closer to family. During the last seven years of her life, still razor-sharp and quick-witted, she taught the whole family how to play the dice game Farkle (which, she noted, grew invariably louder and more spirited when she played at home with the younger generations than when she played with fellow residents of the assisted living home where she lived). She was also a ruthless Rummikub player, keenly keeping an eye on each player's attempt to overtake her and never passed up a chance to correct a wrong move.

She thoroughly enjoyed a 100th-birthday celebration held in her honor at the Fort Collins Senior Center in 2022, surrounded by family members who traveled from all over the country to celebrate with her. Elsie insisted on going to church every Sunday followed by breakfast out.

Elsie is survived by two sisters; her three children, Al Hartmann (Linda) of Sioux Falls, South Dakota; Ron Hartmann (Glenda) of Fort Collins; and Audrey Pleiss of Omaha, Nebraska; eight grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren. She will be remembered with love and for her enduring tenacity in the face of every challenge.



# Tribute Wall

SO

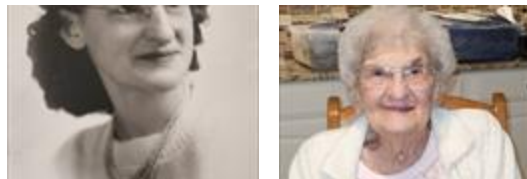
“ Meredith always loved wearing Grandma’s hat!!



Stephanie Ollerich - September 04, 2024 at 03:01 PM



“ 2 files added to the album Memories Album



Bohlender Funeral Chapel - August 28, 2024 at 09:19 AM