



Martha Vang Christensen

October 1, 1920 - September 5, 2015

Funeral services will be held for Martha Anna (Rink) Vang Christensen, age 94, of Storm Lake, Iowa, Sunday, September 13, 2015 at 2:00 p.m. at St. Mark Lutheran Church in Storm Lake. Visitation will take place one hour prior to the service at the church. Burial will be held Monday, September 14, 2015 at 3:00 p.m. at the Wadena Cemetery in Wadena, Minnesota. Martha passed away at Buena Vista Regional Medical Center, September 5, 2015 surrounded by her family.

Born on October 1, 1920, Martha was the second of five children born to Herman and Anna (Schlueter) Rink in Pender, Nebraska. Martha grew up on the family farm, eventually earning her teaching degree from Wayne State Teacher's College, located near her home.

On June 1, 1943, Martha married LeRoy Vang. They farmed near Wolbach, Nebraska, where they started their family that would grow to include five daughters. The couple shared an appreciation of nature and delighted their children with various family adventures. In 1948, Martha and LeRoy established a family farm in Hollandale, Minnesota. In 1958, they moved to Walker, MN after purchasing Bayside Resort on Leech Lake in Walker, MN. After three years, they moved to Morris, MN where they owned the Chokio Locker Plant and Martha taught school in nearby Hancock. In 1965, Martha and LeRoy moved their family to Wadena, Minnesota and on March 4, 1970,

LeRoy passed away. Martha returned to college to complete a Bachelor of Science degree at Bemidji State College in 1971. During the 70's, Martha taught at the elementary school in Verndale, not far from Wadena. Her outstanding work as a teacher resulted in receiving the Minnesota Teacher of Excellence award in 1978. Martha was particularly proud of her "Twenty-five Consecutive Years" award from KOPS (Keep Off Pounds Sensibly), one of many organizations where she enjoyed mutual support and friendships.

After retiring in 1980, Martha began spending winters in the desert and canyon surrounds of Sedona, Arizona. Spring and summer months were back in Wadena, Minnesota to garden and write her weekly column, "In the Garden," for Wadena Pioneer Press.

Martha's sister, Helen Christensen, died February 5, 1988. Martha understood the grief and loss felt by Helen's widower, Clayton Christensen. Their friendship blossomed into a loving relationship which enriched both of their lives from the day of their marriage, February 11, 1989 in Storm Lake, Iowa. Clayton and Martha shared interests in gardening, traveling, bird watching, playing cards, as well as pursuing individual artistic endeavors. Throughout their 26 years of marriage, they generously shared their home, entertaining family and friends, foreign exchange students, Rotary exchange students, card clubs. Martha's oil paintings, china and porcelain painting, jewelry, garden produce and homemade soups and bread are a few of the special gifts she shared, but the gift of her encouraging and uplifting spirit will be remembered by all who knew her.

Martha was preceded in death by her first husband, LeRoy Vang; daughter, Judith Vang; parents, Herman and Anna (Schlueter) Rink; sisters, Edna Mass, Helen Christensen; brother, Richard Rink; and two brothers-in-law, Clarence Mass and Lloyd Sage.

Martha is survived by her husband Clayton; daughters: Linda and husband, Keith Roles of Alexandria, MN; Marion and husband Gary Graham of Hutchinson, MN; Norma Vang of St. Paul, MN; and Brenda Vang and husband James Fittz of Denver, CO. In addition, She is survived by Clayton's daughters: Barbara and husband, Jim Jorgensen of Storm Lake, IA; Dr. Carole Christensen and husband, Dan Peters of Grand Junction, CO; and Diane and husband, Don Bezdicek of Hastings, MN. Martha is also survived by siblings: Esther (Lloyd) Sage of Ogden UT, and Harold (Marilyn) Rink of Pender, NE as well as sister-in-law, Phyllis Rink, and grandchildren: Lisa (Brian) Tonn, Kristi (Joe) Blee, Heather (Rob) Weinmann, Troy (Melanie) Graham, Michael (Tessa) Graham, Christoffer (Sonja) Graham, Ryan (Katie) Bicek, Kevin (Laura) Fittz, Tyler (Tanya) Fittz, Jeff (Jordan) Jorgensen, Chris (Stephanie) Jorgensen, Jessica (Kevin) Denton, Adam Bezdicek, Ryan (Erin) Bezdicek, and Kelly Christensen. Twenty great grandchildren and one great-great grandchild also survive Martha.

Martha, wife, mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother: you leave your loved ones with countless blessings and fun-loving memories. We are all better people because of you. We love you and will miss you dearly!

Memorials may be directed to Sandra J. Schulze American Cancer Society Hope Lodge in Rochester, Minnesota, 411 Second Street NW, Rochester, Minnesota 55901.

The Fratzke & Jensen Funeral Home in Storm Lake is in charge of the arrangements. (www.fratzkejensen.com)

With local assistance from the Schuller Family Funeral Homes' Johnson-Schuller Chapel, Wadena, MN.

Cemetery Details

Wadena Cemetery

Franklin Drive & 5th St. SW
Wadena, MN 56482

Previous Events

Visitation

SEP 13. 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (CT)

St. Mark Lutheran Church
Storm Lake, IA

Service

SEP 13. 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM (CT)

St. Mark Lutheran Church
Storm Lake, IA

Graveside Service

SEP 14. 3:00 PM - 3:30 PM (CT)

Wadena Cemetery
Franklin Drive & 5th St. SW
Wadena, MN 56482

Tribute Wall



“ *Sallie Mahlen lit a candle in memory of Martha Vang Christensen* ”



Sallie Mahlen - September 17, 2015 at 02:16 PM



Martha is one of those people you always remember with a smile, her kindness, caring, friendship, she truly lived her life full.

Sallie Mahlen - September 17, 2015 at 02:24 PM



“ *Larry And Sharon Brincefield lit a candle in memory of Martha Vang Christensen* ”



Larry and Sharon Brincefield - September 15, 2015 at 08:45 PM



“ *Jim Davis lit a candle in memory of Martha Vang Christensen* ”



Jim Davis - September 15, 2015 at 06:51 PM

LO

“ *Lisa Line O'Connor lit a candle in memory of Martha Vang Christensen*



Lisa Line O'Connor - September 15, 2015 at 12:33 PM

LO

Mrs. Vang a teacher that truly cared. Jill and I got to go over to her house sometimes on the weekend and stay and play. It was always a good time had by all. She was so nice to all of us kids. When I got married 31 years ago she gave Tom and I a painting she did on a disk blade. It's hanging in the kitchen and every time I look at it I think of Mrs Vang and her kindness.

Lisa Line O'Connor - September 15, 2015 at 12:38 PM

S(

“ *Susan Lindenau (Kopischke) lit a candle in memory of Martha Vang Christensen*



Susan Lindenau (Kopischke) - September 15, 2015 at 09:34 AM

AK

“ *I believe Mrs. Vang was my 4th grade teacher in Verndale. I have always considered her as my favorite teacher as she was so kind and always made you feel important in everything you did, she was the best! She will be missed. Condolences to her family.*

*Aaron Kern
Verndale*

Aaron Kern - September 15, 2015 at 07:47 AM

RC

“ *Ray Cooper lit a candle in memory of Martha Vang Christensen*



Ray Cooper - September 15, 2015 at 12:04 AM

 Karen Umland

“ *Karen Umland lit a candle in memory of Martha Vang Christensen*



Karen Umland - September 11, 2015 at 06:27 AM

JB

“ *My dear Martha - You are just as beautiful as you were when you lived at Shady Acres with all the wild neighbors. Volleyball games (you broke your glasses) and scavenger hunts (you got in a stranger's car after you found a clue on main street in Wadena). Oh, those were some fun times! Just this past weekend I was looking through my recipe box and I came across the recipe you gave me for gooseberry pie - in your handwriting. And, you gave me the gooseberries to boot! I am so very happy that you continued to have a wonderful life after you left Shady Acres. Clayton - wasn't she a gem? Martha, we will continue to remember all the good times we had as neighbors and friends. Bless you.
Joyce and Bruce Boyne*

Joyce Boyne - September 09, 2015 at 07:52 PM