

Bernita Powers, 83

Dec. 11, 1919 - July 16, 2003

HARLAN – Bernita Cecilia Powers, daughter of Matt and Margaret Sonntag Herbst, was born Dec. 11, 1919, in Panama. She was baptized and confirmed at St. Mary's Catholic Church and attended school at St. Mary's Catholic School in Panama.

Nov. 3, 1936, Bernita married Eugene Richard Powers at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Panama. One son was born to this union, Ronald. After their marriage, they made their home in Panama, until 1945, when they moved to Waterloo. She was employed by the Iowa State Liquor Commission, until retiring in June of 1976 after 21 1/2 years of service. In January of 1979, Bernita and Eugene moved to Council Bluffs. In 1988, they moved to Harlan, which has been their home since. She was a member of St. Michael's Catholic Church in Harlan. She died July 16, 2003, at the University of Nebraska Medical Center in Omaha, NE, at age 83 years, seven months and five days.

In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her son, Ronald; her husband, Eugene; her brothers and sisters, Nick, Olive Herbst, Victor, Elmer, Leonard and Eileen Sondag. Survivors include her daughter-in-law, Cecilia Powers of Wood Dale, IL; her grandchildren, Lynn Marie (Robert) Ruehrdanz of Wood Dale, IL; Michael Powers of Pennsylvania; Robert Powers (Karen) of Connecticut; her great grandsons, Kevin Ruehrdanz, David Ruehrdanz and Alex Ruehrdanz, all of Wood Dale, IL; her sister, Helen Herkenrath of Portsmouth; nieces, nephews and other relatives.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated July 19, 2003, at St. Michael's Catholic Church in Harlan, with Rev. Robert Hoeffler celebrant. Burial was in St. Mary's Cemetery in Portsmouth, with Michael Powers, Robert Ruehrdanz, Robert Powers, Kevin Ruehrdanz, Alex Ruehrdanz and David Ruehrdanz casket bearers. Pauley Jones Funeral Home in charge of arrangements.

