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Loie McElwain, 87 ✓

May 1, 1925 - Oct. 7, 2012

WOODBINE — Loie Janice Carolyn (Ehlert) McElwain was born May 1, 1925, to Frederic and Jennie (Beebee) Ehlert in Woodbine. She was named after her grandmother, Lois Hudson Beebee, who was often called "Loie" by her husband, Frederick Beebee. Loie was raised in Woodbine and graduated from Woodbine High School in 1942. She attended Drake University in Des Moines and received her Bachelor of Music Education degree. While at Drake she played the piano for KOI Radio with world renowned pianist Roger Williams. Her teaching career began in Logan, where she taught K-12 band and vocal from 1946-1950.

In 1950 Loie married Merrill McElwain at the United Methodist Church in Woodbine. The couple lived in Spokane, WA while Merrill was in the United States Air Force. They then moved to Omaha, NE and in the fall of 1957 they moved to Woodbine. From 1967-1980 Loie taught music at the Woodbine school where, amongst many other accomplishments, all three of her choruses (Girls, Boys and Mixed) received 1 ratings each of the thirteen years she taught there. In 1973, fourteen choir members were selected for the Iowa All State Chorus. In other years, eight, ten and twelve students were chosen for the All State Chorus. From 1981-1986 she taught elementary music in Dunlap and she continued to accompany and help with the Woodbine school's music program. Loie began teaching piano lessons at the age of 15 and over the course of her career numerous students won at the district level of the IMTA Auditions and went on to receive Superior ratings at the state level. Her students also participated in the annual Iowa Federated Music Club Festival, always receiving high ratings. She always maintained a schedule of between 25-50 piano lessons weekly, even until recently. Loie was a member of the First United Methodist Church in Woodbine. She served her church as the choir director for many years as well as being one of the pianists for Sunday services and the accompanist for the church choir. She also served for 25 years as the accompanist for the men's singing group The Noteables, missing very few of their 450+ performances. Loie loved writing notes and sending cards to family and friends, riding her bike, playing the organ at Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Woodbine - which she did for 12 years, enjoying croquet contests with her family, and entering and frequently winning the football contests sponsored by area news-papers. From 1978 to 1979 Loie's family hosted AFS student Augusto Silva from Bucaramanga, Colombia who has remained a close member of the family ever since. In a recent interview Loie stated that her greatest achievement was her family. Loie died on Sunday, October 7, 2012, at the Creighton Medical Center in Omaha, NE at the age of 87 years, five months, and six days.

Loie was preceded in death by her parents; five brothers, Frederic, Hudson, Leslie, Fargo and Corrie Ehlert. She is survived by her husband, Merrill McElwain of Woodbine; children, David (Karen) McElwain of Wayne, NE, Dan (Jan) McElwain of Harlan, Barb (Steve) Sturgeon of Overland Park, KS, Dennis McElwain of Sioux City, Douglas McElwain of Woodbine, Dana (Carol) McElwain of Fort Collins, CO, Augusto (Zaida) Silva of Decatur, IL; 12 grandchildren; 7+ great grandchildren; and many other relatives and friends.

Funeral services were held at 2:00 p.m. Thursday, October 11, 2012 at the United Methodist Church in Woodbine with Rev. Dr. J. Samuel Subramanian officiating. Private music was Prelude: Blessed Assurance, Great Is Thy Faithfulness, People Need the Lord Yes, Jesus Loves Me, What a Friend We Have In Jesus, Wonderful Cross, There Is A Fountain, Edelweiss, Oh How He Loves You and Me, I'm So Glad There's You-Composed by Dana McElwain, and On Christmas Morning-Composed by Dana McElwain. Words of Comfort and Greeting were "Autumn" composed by Dana McElwain and "September" written by Gladys McElwain. The service music included, "I Am Set Free" words and music by Dana McElwain with accompanist Dana McElwain (based on Zechariah 9:11) by soloist, Sue Benedickt. Scripture reading was the 23rd Psalm. The Noteables sang "Family of God" and "Side by Side" with accompanist Nancy Foutch; Scripture Reading: Isaiah 40:28-31; "Fly" by soloist Sue Benedickt with accompanist Dana McElwain. Congregational Hymn was "Amazing Grace" with accompanists Bob Smith and Dana McElwain. "The Lord's Prayer" was sung by soloist Dennis Alvis with accompanist Michael Cotton; "Pie' Jesu" by soloists Hilary Harper Moores and Elyse Harper with accompanist Michael Cotton; "A Child of Hope" by soloists Sue Benedickt, Diane Book and Beth Fouts conducted by Mike Esser with accompanist Michael Cotton and the Postlude was by Bob Smith. Honorary pall bearers were Richard Ehlert, Robert Ehlert and Roger Ehlert. Pall bearers were David McElwain, Dan McElwain, Steve Sturgeon, Dennis McElwain, Douglas McElwain, Dana McElwain, and Augusto Silva. Final resting place was in the Woodbine Cemetery.



*Fouts Funeral
Home*
510 Normal,
Woodbine, IA 51579
712-647-5123
800-644-3996