

**Leota Swensen, 82**

July 6, 1928 - Sept. 16, 2010

**HARLAN** — Leota Bernice Swensen, daughter of Oscar and Amy Lou (Lee) Rold, was born on a farm near Avoca, on July 6, 1928. She attended country school and later graduated from Avoca High School with the class of 1945. Leota was baptized at Calvary Baptist Church in Walnut and was active in her church throughout her life. She was an officer in 4-H and enjoyed growing up on the family farm helping take care of the livestock, even the pigs.



Leota met her future husband Norman "Rocky" Swensen while he was working for her brother, Elvin "Ozzie" Rold, on the farm. They were united in marriage on September 26, 1946 at the Pottawattamie County Court House in Council Bluffs. Five children were born to this union: Jerald, James, JoAnn, Jean Marie and Jeffrey. Leota and Rocky farmed in Shelby County for several years after their marriage. After farming, Rocky worked at several jobs in Harlan while Leota was raising the children. The family moved into Harlan in 1969 when Rocky took a job with the city of Harlan. Church life and her family life were the most important things to Leota. After her children were grown, she worked part-time positions at CDS and at Concerned Inc. As a member of Grace Baptist Church in Harlan she was active in many church events, especially youth groups. She was known in her neighborhood as the "neighborhood grandma." Her door was always open, only locking it when she took a bath. Music was a special gift of Leota's and her interest in human nature led her to play her accordion and the piano at area care facilities. She found time to belong to a sewing circle to make lap quilts for the nursing home and bandages for church missions. She also made personalized quilts for each of her kids, grandkids and great grandkids. Leota died on September 16, 2010 at Methodist Hospital in Omaha, NE having attained the age of eighty-two years two months and ten days.

In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband Norman "Rocky" Swensen; her son, Jerald Lynn Swensen and her siblings Mildred Thompson, Ervin "Ozzie" Rold and Leonard Rold. She is survived by her children: James D. Swensen and his wife Janet of Harlan; JoAnn Morris of Council Bluffs; Jean Marie Johnson of Hays, KS and Jeffrey Swensen and his wife Lori of Harlan; her daughter-in-law, Penny Green of Traverse City, MI; fourteen grandchildren; eighteen great grandchildren; nieces and nephews, other relatives, many friends and a host of "neighborhood grandkids."

Pastor Joe Earle officiated the 10:30 a.m.

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funeral service at Grace Baptist Church in Harlan. Serving as casket bearers were Dan Good, Christopher Swensen, Patrick Morris, Gaige Knudson, Robert Swensen, and Brent Swensen. Interment was held at Cuppy's Grove Cemetery in Monroe Township.

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