Leona B. Ransbarger

Her Legacy… Leona B. Ransbarger, 83, of Oroville, went to live forever with her Lord and Savior on Tuesday, November 5, 2013. She was born the daughter of William Jewell and Edna May Smith on May 11, 1930 in Pasadena, Ca. As a graduate of Chico State University, Chico, CA, Leona earned an Elementary Teaching Degree in 1963. After graduation, she pursued additional higher education through weekend and night classes at Chico University. Leona was an elementary school teacher for 30 years for the Oroville School District educating elementary school aged children. One of her greatest joys was hearing “Mrs. Ransbarger!” by children (now adults) and parents within the community in which she taught for years. Leona was an active member of the Oroville Church of the Nazarene for more than 50 years. In her senior years, Leona and her husband, Willis, continued attending church at Foothill Community Church in Oroville. She discovered at the early age of six, she wanted to teach. This passion for teaching and educating led her to be a Sunday School Teacher, Youth Director, Children’s Education Director, Youth and Children’s Choir Director, Girls Club Leader, Vacation Bible School Director and worker and Children’s Camp Counselor. Leona was the church pianist for more than 30 years. Have you seen her garden! Second only to her children and family, was her love for her garden. Her yard was her solace. Leona spent years cultivating the soil by meticulously processing the mulch piles and claimed it to be THE BEST soil in Northern CA. It was not uncommon for cars to pause in front of the yard to admire the plethora of colors from the daylilies, roses, black-eyed susans, irises, crepe myrtles and daffodils, to name just a few. She also grew her own, personal, mini-orchard of apples, oranges and grapes. Oh how Leona loved to pick the fruit with the help of her grandchildren.

Her Family… Leona was preceded in death by her daughter, Janet Sturgeon; her husband of 59 years, Willis Ransbarger; her two sisters, Wilma Tucker and Ruth LaVerne McCoy. Leona is survived by her son, George “Ron” Ransbarger (Darlene Milsap, former daughter-in-law); Joyce (Royce) Sturgeon; grandchildren Darron (Kristiane) Ransbarger, Damon Ransbarger, Danielle Ransbarger, Dionna (Ryan) Wikum and Donovan Ransbarger, Lynna (Jason) Duron, Ryan (Erica) Starr, Lisa Starr, Jeremy Sturgeon, Jimi (Douglas) Sturgeon-Smith, and Jameson Sturgeon. Her legacy continues through the lives of her 11 great-grandchildren. They called her “Grandma”, “Grandma Leona” and “GGMa”.

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