



Elsie Louise Springer

July 7, 1929 - December 8, 2013

Elsie Louise Springer was born July 7, 1929, in Kansas City, Missouri to James and Doris Thompson. She was the eldest of two daughters, with a half-brother, James Thompson Jr. Elsie grew up in DeQueen, Arkansas. During her teenage years she worked at the local drugstore and darned socks with other teenage girls during WWII. Elsie also worked as a telephone/ switch board operator in DeQueen.

In 1950, Elsie married Chester Howard, and later had three children, Polly Ann, Michael Sue, and Chris Chester. Her husband, Chester, was diagnosed with Huntington's disease in the early 1950s, and they later divorced due to the impact of the illness. Elsie, with the support of her parents, attended the University of Arkansas to earn her teaching license. She accepted a teaching position in Harlan, Oregon in 1960, and moved there with her three children. Elsie married Dan Springer in 1961. Their blended family included Polly, Mickie, Chris, Bonnie, Brenda, and Dan Jr.. Dan and Elsie later had two daughters, Doris Virginia and Alice Louise.

Elsie continued her teaching career in the Philomath area, first at Blodgett, then Kings Valley and Philomath Elementary, and, finally, Philomath Middle School. Elsie retired from teaching in 1988, ending 26 years in education with the Philomath School District.

In 1970 Elsie's son, Chris, was diagnosed with Huntington's disease at the age

of 14. She spent the next 19 years caring for Chris while raising her two daughters and teaching full time. Chris passed away in January of 1989. In 1984, Polly Ann Rood, Elsie's daughter, was also diagnosed with Huntington's. Polly passed away in August, 2003.

The impact of Huntington's Disease on Elsie's family was a tremendous burden. Elsie managed the challenge of caring for family members through her faith in God and was deeply committed to prayer. Her courage, wisdom, and the ability to care for others were her greatest strengths. Elsie was preceded in death by her sister, Doris Ann Everett, brother, James Thompson and her children, Chris and Polly.

Shortly after her retirement from teaching Elsie developed an almost overnight case of rheumatoid arthritis. The disease dramatically limited her ability to move freely and enjoy her retirement. Elsie dealt with multiple surgeries and chronic pain over the next 20 years. However, with determination and a sense of humor, she continued to think of others before her own needs.

For the last 11 years Elsie resided at Good Samaritan Fairlawn Village in Gresham, Oregon. During this time she would lead and participate in daily devotions, developed several very close friendships, and would read to people who were losing their vision. Elsie cared deeply for her friends at Fairlawn. The family is grateful for the attention and care Elsie received while living there.

Elsie's life and faith are celebrated by her daughters, Alice Springer, Dorie Vickery, and Mickie Bush, and step-children Bonnie Randolph, Brenda Powers, and Dan Springer. She is fondly remembered by 16 grandchildren, and 19 great-grand children.

Along with her ability to care for others, Elsie enjoyed reading, baking, sewing,

and crochet. She maintained a prayer journal and read her Bible daily. Despite the challenges of her life Elsie maintained her faith and a sense of humor. She was a woman with tremendous inner strength, stemming from her strong belief in a benevolent God.

In lieu of flowers memorial donations in Elsie's name can be made to Huntington's Disease Research at <https://www.hdsa.org/how-you-can-help/donations.html>

A Memorial Service will be held at 11:00 am, Friday December 13th at McHenry Funeral Home.

Tribute Wall

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“ *Elsie and I met at a writing class in Portland. Since I was trying to commute daily from Scio, Elsie offered to share her daughter's home which she was housesitting. We spent the six weeks together and I learned of her beauty, courage and faith. Her students were so fortunate to have her as a teacher; I was fortunate to become a colleague and friend. Elsie inspires in life and in death. God Bless Her and the family.*

Beverly Dougherty

Beverly Dougherty - December 12, 2013 at 10:00 PM