



Esther Vera Bolker

December 26, 1922 - November 20, 2013

Beloved wife, sister, mother, grandmother, aunt, friend, Esther Bolker of Corvallis died Nov. 20, 2013, at home, surrounded by her family.

Esther was born in Ericson, a small town in the Nebraska sand hills. A bright and intelligent child, she taught herself to read before the age of 4, and quickly advanced through the grades in the local one-room schoolhouse. Throughout her life she loved learning. When her family moved to Omaha, she was able to graduate from Central High School at 16.

She married Norman Bolker, the love of her life, when she was 18. Esther and Norman celebrated their 72nd anniversary last June.

Esther had started college but put her education on hold to work and put Norman through medical school. After raising her four children, Esther returned to college, attending Gonzaga University in Spokane, Wash., where she earned a degree in classical Greek and Latin civilization, and graduated summa cum laude.

During their years in Spokane, Esther and Norman acquired a large collection of art prints, which they ultimately donated to Gonzaga. Esther was the first president of Connoisseur Concerts, a chamber music program in Spokane. She volunteered at the Gonzaga library and served on the library board for the

State of Washington.

She also became the first woman president of the Spokane Society of the Archaeological Institute of America, and she served on Gonzaga's Board of Regents for several years.

Residents of Corvallis for the past 20 years, Esther and Norman were active in the community. For many years they both helped at Stone Soup, the free-meal-assistance program. They were involved in the Corvallis-OSU Symphony and the Beit Am community.

Esther loved classical music, cooking for her family, reading, poetry, art and archaeology, and all kinds of word games and puzzles. Until the end of her life she successfully solved the Sunday New York Times crossword puzzles from top to bottom, in ink.

She is survived by her husband, Norman Bolker; her daughters, Beth Galletto, Eve Stocker and Judith Bolker; her son, Jim Bolker; granddaughters, Francoise Stovall, Audrey Bolker, Rachel Bolker and Jaime Bolker; and many nieces and nephews.

A memorial for Esther Bolker will take place at 1 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 26, at Beit Am, 625 N.W. 36th St., Corvallis.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made in her name to Linn Benton Food Share or Benton Hospice Service.