



Marguerite Sanders

March 2, 1908 - October 25, 2009

Marguerite Sanders lived a long and full life. From her humble beginnings in Mason County, Michigan, she worked hard to earn an education, raise her family and enjoy the fruits of a good life. Marguerite loved to experience and appreciate the world around her. She did many things in her life, all of which shaped her into the person her family and friends loved dearly. The turn of the century decade, from 1900 to 1909, was one of transition and progress. The industrial age was in full swing and mass production made prices fall to all time lows. Henry Ford provided the first affordable car and the Sunday drive became a national pastime. In Mason County, Michigan, life for Waldo and Martha (Sensinbaugh) Smith was also in transition. On March 2, 1908, they welcomed the birth of their second child, a beautiful daughter they named Marguerite. Marguerite was born and raised in the small community of Custer with her two sisters, Waneta and Mildred, and three brothers, William, Marshall and Thomas, who died as an infant. Marguerite loved to be outdoors as a child - cross-country skiing in the winter months, and hanging around the pond fishing and bird watching in the summer. While her mother was a busy homemaker, her father earned a living as a railroad engineer. Marguerite loved her parents very much and often said "Wonderful parents are a two-fold blessing. First when you have them with you, and second when you have your memory." Sadly, her mother died suddenly while working in her garden one day – Marguerite was 14 and old enough to take over the responsibilities of running the home. The siblings were a close-knit group and Marguerite was a

great source of dependability and strength for her family. Although she held much responsibility at home, she worked hard to complete her education and was a member of the first women's basketball team at Custer High School. She proudly received her diploma from Custer High in 1926. Thereafter, Marguerite pursued a teaching certificate from Mason County Normal school, and then taught in several one-room schoolhouses throughout Mason County. Like many teachers of the time, she would board at houses next to the school so that in the winter months she could start a fire early to warm the classroom and shovel a path for students walking to school. Marguerite was just a young impressionable teenager of 14 when she first saw her future husband, Orval Sanders, walking down Chauvez Road past their home. He was so handsome in his Army uniform, home on furlough from serving overseas in World War I. Marguerite and Orval were happily married 7 years later on September 9, 1929. They celebrated 64 years of marriage until Orval's death on April 6, 1983. The years that they spent together marked many of the happiest moments in Marguerite's long life. The two made their home for 68 years at 427 Maple Road in Custer, where their daughter Martha was born and where they shared much love and laughter with cherished family and friends. After the arrival of daughter Martha and son Ron, Marguerite stopped teaching to devote herself to her role of mother. She eventually went back to school at Central Michigan University, attending at the same time as her daughter. After earning her BA in Education in 1957, Marguerite began teaching 5th and 6th grade in the Scottville Public Schools, where she taught until her retirement. Meanwhile, her husband, Orval, worked as a carpenter and a mason. Marguerite would often come home after a full day of teaching and help make cement blocks, many of which were used on their own home. In later years, Marguerite moved from their beloved home to Sherman Oaks in Ludington, but she was always happy to come back home to Custer to visit. Marguerite loved the outdoors. She enjoyed deer hunting for many years right in Mason County, continuing until her last hunt at age 95. Early in her married life, Marguerite and Orval helped his brother, Bob, run a riding stable and horse

track. This became a passion for Marguerite, something she was only too happy to pass on to her daughter, Martha, her granddaughter, Lacey, and her great great granddaughter, Jordyn. Marguerite didn't retire her saddle from trail riding until she was 85. At home, she found a sanctuary in her large vegetable garden or tending to her beautiful irises. She took great pride in their beauty and many people started their own iris gardens from hers. Marguerite enjoyed playing Scrabble with family and her good friend, Peg Rider. She looked forward to every family gathering, which always featured her frozen strawberry jam and freezer corn. Her specialty, however, was her lemon meringue pie, which everyone loved. An adventurous soul, Marguerite loved to travel. She had visited 48 states and countries – her favorite being Alaska. Her traveling companion was usually her sister-in-law and dear friend, Lillian, though Marguerite and her daughter, Martha, enjoyed going to South Carolina together to visit her niece, Sue Sanders Shealy. Marguerite fondly remembered her very first airplane ride was in a wooden-frame with canvas on a DNR airplane during a summer class she took. She also remembered what an amazing sight it was the day the first automobile came to Mason County. When she wasn't off on some new adventure, Marguerite was involved in several organizations within her community. She was a member of the Mason County Association of Retired School Personnel and the DAV Auxiliary. A charter member of the Custer VFW Gold Bar Post #5096 Ladies Auxiliary, Marguerite had served as commander, and was honored this past year for her 75-years of membership. Marguerite was a former member of Redeemer Lutheran Church in Scottville and Scottville United Methodist Church. Marguerite was a kind and loving woman, the family "go-to" person, keeping the family network together with a reliability depended upon by all. She touched the lives of many in her roles as a wife, mother, grandmother, friend and teacher. She will be dearly missed. Marguerite was preceded in death by her husband Orval; sisters, Waneta Smith and Mildred Sanders; and her brothers William, Marshall and infant brother, Thomas. She is survived by

her children, Martha of Custer and Ronald (Donna) Sanders of Ludington; her grandchildren, Walter, Warren and Ronald Engelberg, Christine (Brad) McKay, Robert (Danya) and Scott (Stacy) Sanders; her great-grandchildren Brian (Ruth), Bradley (Holly), Keane, Kyle and Lacey Engelberg, Ashlyn and Drake McKay, Colton and Maylan Sanders and Spencer Sanders; her great-great-grandchildren Jordyn, Trenton, Laingston, Jaxson, Deacon, Connor and Keane Engelberg II. A time of visitation will be held on Wednesday evening at Stephens Funeral Home from 7 to 9 pm. Funeral services for Marguerite will be held at 11 am on Thursday, October 29 at Stephens Funeral Home in Scottville with the Rev. Norman Letsinger officiating. A luncheon follows at Custer VFW. Please visit Marguerite's personal memory page at www.stephensfuneralhome.net to read her complete life story, sign the guest book or leave a memory for her family.