



Donna Blake

January 22, 1929 - November 8, 2015

Donna Marie Nelson Blake was born on January 29, 1929. She was raised on a farm between Alta and Aurelia by her parents, Adel and Herman Nelson. She had a happy childhood and grew up with three older stepsisters and a step brother and with two younger half-brothers. Her sisters were Mildred Nelson Gustafson, Lois Nelson Crapser and Ruby Nelson Laursen. Her brothers were Merle Nelson, John Nelson and Jim Nelson. Donna passed away on November 8, 2015 at the Hawkeye Care Center in Spirit Lake.

Donna graduated from Aurelia High School in 1946, where she was active in music and plays. During high school, Donna met her future husband, Rolan Blake who had returned from active duty with the Army Air Corps during World War 2. Donna worked for a year for Northwestern Bell Telephone Company in Cherokee and then Donna and Rolan were married on June 22, 1947 at Trinity Lutheran church in Alta, IA. They farmed in Cherokee county for eleven years. She learned as a young wife about a woman's role on the farm, including feeding men working the fields, raising chickens, and growing a garden. Rolan and Donna had two children, Patricia Mary and Alan Max. Each year was highlighted by many family get-togethers with both sides of their family, including Christmas, Thanksgiving and birthday celebrations.

Donna and Rolan embarked on a new career path in 1958, when they moved to Akron, Iowa, where Rolan went to work for the Farm Bureau Insurance

Company. Their years in Akron were highlighted by their membership in a Lutheran young couples group called "YoMaCo's." They considered these years' very happy times and formed many lifetime friendships.

The insurance career led to a move to the Arthur-Odebolt area. They eventually purchased a real estate and insurance business from Dwight Meyer, which was a career move that they enjoyed until their retirement in 1991. They loved living in Odebolt where they filled their home with antiques and many happy memories. Their children, Patricia and Alan graduated from Odebolt high school and later brought their families to their Odebolt home for many fun times where they often enjoyed Donna's wonderful treats, including homemade rye bread, Swedish tea rings and the "perfect" chocolate chip cookies. Rolan and Donna were active members of Faith Lutheran church in Odebolt.

Donna and Rolan purchased a cabin in 1988 on the East Shore of Big Spirit Lake where they loved fishing and playing with their children and grandchildren and those beautiful sunsets while sitting on their porch.

Rolan passed away in 1999 and Donna moved to Spirit Lake in 2004 and enjoyed getting to know many people in the Spirit Lake Community. She was a member of Grace Lutheran church in Spirit Lake. Donna had a lifelong interest in antiques and she was a member of Questers for over 30 years. Donna loved music and enjoyed reading and mostly enjoyed her time with family and friends.

Donna was preceded in death by her husband, parents, siblings, and great grandson Walter James Blake. She is survived by daughter Patricia (Doug) Koenck of Yorba Linda, CA and son, Alan (Sue) Blake, of Spirit Lake. She is also survived by four grandchildren, Jason Koenck, James (Rachel) Blake, Jenny (Jon) Schibsted and Andrew (Shria) Blake, as well as 7 great-

grandchildren, Ashley Koenck, Lily Koenck, Leah Blake, Owen Blake, Triston Radant, Alexis Radant and Hazel Blake. Also surviving are sister-in-law Eleanor Anderson of Aurelia, sister-in-law Rose Nelson of California, MD, sister-in-law and brother-in-law Annette and Don Blake of Cherokee, and many nieces and nephews.

A funeral service will be held at 11:00 A.M., Wednesday, November 11, 2015, at the Grace Lutheran Church in Spirit Lake. Burial will be at 3:00 P.M. at Afton Township Cemetery in Cherokee. Visitation will begin at 9:30 A.M. on Wednesday until the time of the service at the church.

Tribute Wall

LB

“ *Donna Blake*

Lori Blair - November 17, 2015 at 10:18 PM

BC

“ *I met Donna quite by accident due to our shared love of Phoenix Bird China. I saw her name in a publication about Phoenix, and gave her a call. Soon, we received an invitation to visit with Rolan and Donna in their home. Then, we invited them to our home to "share" our collection of Phoenix. Imagine our surprise when we found that Rolan and Donna's son was married to Sue Smith, the daughter of old family friends, Jim and Naomi Smith of Spirit Lake. Jim was on the faculty of Lake Center school when our family attended school there. Jim and my grandfather were long-time fishing buddies over on Stony Point. We exchanged Christmas cards with Donna and Rolan for several years, then somehow lost track of each other. We were so sorry to hear of Donna's passing (I think she wrote that Rolan had passed away in one of her Christmas greetings), and wish to extend condolences to all the family. We enjoyed our common interest in Phoenix china, and it is always fun to meet a new friend!*

Bob and Nancy (Haar) Cozine - November 17, 2015 at 12:40 PM

RM

“ *Sue, Alan and families, so sorry for your loss. Donna was such a sweetheart. She will be greatly missed. Our Love and sympathy to you.*

Reba and Alan Munson - November 17, 2015 at 09:11 AM

SN

“ Alan and Pat - I'm sorry to read about your mom's death. She was such a wonderful lady and such a good friend to my parents. I am sure she will be greatly missed, but you have wonderful memories of her.

Sally Nellis - November 13, 2015 at 01:38 PM

MJ

“ Donna Blake

Marv & Fran Jungjohan - November 12, 2015 at 09:35 PM

PF

“ I remember meeting Rolan and Donna and family when they lived in Akron, visiting in their home in Odebolt., Rolans funeral and visiting Donna in Spirit Lake. Donna stayed with me when she attended an Anniversary of our "YoMaCo" group at Immanuel Lutheran. So many good memories! Our sympathy to her family. Phyllis Frisk and family

Phyllis Frisk - November 12, 2015 at 07:53 PM

IA

“ I always enjoyed Donna when they lived in Odebolt and went to Faith Lutheran there-in memory of Donna a donation has been made to Faith-my deepest sympathies go out to all in Donna's family

Ila Oxendale, Arthur - November 12, 2015 at 02:12 PM

JS

“ I remember as a young girl staying at Donna and Roland's house in Odebolt. I can even picture the floor plan of their house to this day!! My parents, Shirley and Arnie Clark, shared the same anniversary and they would often celebrate together. Donna was a sweetheart and very good friend to my mom. Thoughts and prayers are with all of you.

Jennifer(Clark) Schomberg - November 12, 2015 at 10:28 AM

AV

“ Donna Blake

Anne Hesch Varner - November 12, 2015 at 05:22 AM

EJ

“ Donna Blake

Ed Jacobson - November 11, 2015 at 11:14 PM

BV

“ Alan and Patsy,
I have wonderful memories of your mom. She will be missed. However, I'm sure she will be welcomed by many in Heaven, especially your terrific dad.

Barb

Barbara Votrobeck - November 11, 2015 at 09:02 AM

JR

“ Donna Blake

Jim & Diane Richard - November 11, 2015 at 08:56 AM

JB

“ We have very fond memories of Donna and Rolan. They helped us buy our home and covered our insurance needs over many years. We will miss their friendships.

Jack & Carol Bensley - November 11, 2015 at 08:49 AM

LM

“ Thoughts and prayers- Donna and Rolan were very special people to us. They were wonderful next door neighbors. We miss them dearly. With sympathy

Leona Mason - November 10, 2015 at 08:53 PM

HS

“ Donna Blake

Harold and Meg Sunde - November 10, 2015 at 08:38 PM

DW

“ I lived only a few blocks from Donna. We enjoyed walking in Isthmus Park where Donna shared insights on many issues. Donna enriched my day. To each of you her family, I am so sorry for your loss.

Dorothy Wagner - November 10, 2015 at 06:52 PM

DS

“ Donna was awesome! I have known her, her husband and her son Alan for many years, Alan and I graduated together in 1966. Whenever I would return to Odebolt, it seemed like Donna was always there to say hi and bring me up to date on Alan! She was very proud of her family and rightfully so. Many will enjoy the pleasure of having known her.

Dave Streed - November 10, 2015 at 05:30 PM

JH

“ Donna Blake

Jodie Rohlf Hudson - November 10, 2015 at 03:46 PM



“ Donna Blake

November 10, 2015 at 10:33 AM

PT

“ I was honored to have gotten to know Donna in the past year or so at Keelson Harbour, her and I would have visits and popcorn together many times. She was so kind to me and loved to talk about her wonderful son and all her family. She will be missed. Alan what a wonderful son u were and know the memories of better times will see you through at this time. God bless you all

Patricia Thomson - November 09, 2015 at 10:52 PM

PU

“ Donna Blake

Pastor Trish Underberg - November 09, 2015 at 10:20 PM

FJ

“ We were neighbors on Lincoln. avenue. Bought our first home from them.

Faye Johnson - November 09, 2015 at 09:53 PM

PS

“ Donna Blake

Paul Smith - November 09, 2015 at 08:28 PM

AM

“ Our deepest sympathies Donna was our next door neighbor in Odebolt when she lived in the duplex then she moved away as we did too.

Angela Mumm - November 09, 2015 at 07:55 PM

MS

“ I'll remember Donna and Roland as gracious loving relatives that made our family's visits to Iowa enjoyable. My condolences to Al and Sue and their children and grandchildren during this sad time.

Marcia Lee smith - November 09, 2015 at 07:52 PM

KA

“ I'm so sorry for your loss. Sue, I really enjoyed our talk the other day about Donna and my mom. Donna was such a sweet lady and always remembered my name. She will certainly be missed by many.

Kathy Andrews - November 09, 2015 at 07:48 PM

SS

“ I always liked Donna and Roland. When I would visit my grandma Middleton in Odebolt, I would go talk to whichever was in the office. This would lead to a cool drink and snooker in the basement. I spent lots of vacations in Spirit Lake and there was always a dinner and visits with Alan's family. After Grandma Smith's death, I haven't made it to Spirit Lake. Sorry I couldn't see Donna one last time. Bye Donna Blake

Stuart Smith - November 09, 2015 at 06:31 PM

JH

“ Donna Blake

Jim and Bonnie Harmon - November 09, 2015 at 06:08 PM

CM

“ *The Blakes were great family friends and we were thrilled to have them move in next door in Odebolt. Donna was always up for fun, even when we called them after midnight to come over for homemade ice cream. I'll miss not getting a Christmas card from her this year as we've always stayed in touch. I'm so thankful I made the trip to Spirit Lake a little over two weeks ago to have a last visit with Donna. Love you Alan and Sue, Pat and Doug.*

Cheryl Moe - November 09, 2015 at 05:29 PM

SD

“ *Donna Blake*

Steve and Claudia Doty - November 09, 2015 at 04:35 PM

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MH

“ *We have been blessed to be the Blakes' neighbors, sandwiched between Alan and Sue (North) and Roland and Donna Blake on the south. What wonderful neighbors--quiet, fun and always pleasant. We had greatly enjoyed fishing with Roland and will always miss them both. However, we were pleased to be able to buy Donna's cottage, and now our family has the joy of their spiritual presence as a nice reminder as we enjoy sunrises and sunsets on the east shore of Big Spirit Lake.*

Mike and Sally Hood - November 09, 2015 at 04:21 PM

CS

“ *Donna Blake*

Chad Schuchert - November 09, 2015 at 04:08 PM

KB

“ *Donna was a lovely soul. She was so very proud of her children, grandchildren & great-grandchildren. She loved her community and always shared stories of the lake and the surrounding community with so much pride. She had a sparkle & a zest for life. We were honored to know her.*

Karen, Ryan & Henry Burchard - November 09, 2015 at 03:00 PM

AO

“ *Donna was part of our "gang" from Grace Lutheran. We celebrated birthdays, ate tacos at McKeens, did the Dairy Queen on Sunday nights and took in an occasional movie in Milford together. Donna was a good friend and we will miss her very much.*

Ann Olson - November 09, 2015 at 02:29 PM

PR

“ *Donna was a member of my church and she was a tablemate of my mom. I thoroughly enjoyed visiting with her. She had many stories to tell about her past. She always was glad to see me and I her. Was so sad to see her spot empty last night (Sunday) and then was told about her passing. What a wonderful lady off to her heavenly home. Prayers to all.*

Peggy Rick - November 09, 2015 at 12:52 PM

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Peggy Rick - November 09, 2015 at 12:51 PM

HH

“ Donna Blake

Hank & Sheryl Hall - November 08, 2015 at 05:56 PM