



Elinor M. Bedell

March 9, 1923 - March 2, 2017

Elinor Healy Bedell, age 93, passed away peacefully at her Naples, Florida home on March 2, 2017 after a brief illness. She was born in Mankato, MN on March 9th, 1923. She was known to friends and family as a gentle, kind, and loving woman.

She grew up in St. Paul, Minnesota and during her childhood and whenever she could later in life she enjoyed summers in Grand Marais, MN.

Elinor graduated from University High School in Minneapolis, MN in 1941 and attended Iowa State University where she met her husband. They established their home in Spirit Lake, Iowa. There she was active in the United Methodist Church, PTA, PEO, LBU, United Way, and other community organizations. She was a Cub Scout and Girl Scout leader.

Elinor was the co-founder of the Voluntary Action Center in Spirit Lake, Iowa, and she was one of the first members of the Lakes Art Center where she enjoyed becoming an accomplished potter.

When her husband was elected to Congress in 1974 she moved to Washington, DC. There she enjoyed learning about our nation's history and giving tours to constituents from northwest Iowa. She was active in working for world peace and a founding member of Peace Links, a woman's people-to-

people organization that connected woman across the world to inform the public about the threat of nuclear war.

In 1998 she and her husband donated 80 acres of land on East Okoboji Lake in Spirit Lake to the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. Today the Elinor Bedell State Park, named in her honor, has extensive trails, camping, playground, a picnic shelter, and wildlife habitat.

She is survived by her husband of 73 years, Congressman Berkley Bedell, three children Ken Bedell (Kathie) of Alexandria, VA, Tom Bedell (Molly) of Bend, OR, and Joanne Quinn (Mike) of Loveland, CO, eight grandchildren and eleven great grandchildren.

Elinor is preceded in death by her sister, Frances Naftalin of Minneapolis, Minnesota and her parents Marie and Kenneth Healy.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be given in Elinor's name to the Foundation for Alternative and Integrative Medicine, P.O. Box 2860, Loveland, CO 80539 or to the Selby Duis Playground at Elinor Bedell State Park. Send playground donations to Iowa Great Lakes Rotary, P.O. Box 132, Okoboji, Iowa 51355. Please note it is for the Shelby Duis Playground in memory of Elinor Bedell.

A memorial service will be held on Saturday, July 22, at 10:30 am at the Spirit Lake United Methodist Church in Spirit Lake, Iowa with a reception to follow at the Elinor Bedell State Park Pavilion.

Previous Events

Service

JUL **22**. 10:30 AM - 11:15 AM (CT)

United Methodist Church
1812 Gary Ave
Spirit Lake, IA 51360

Tribute Wall

JL

“ I did not have the pleasure of knowing Elinor but I thought of her nearly every day. I was fortunate enough to walk the trails at Elinor Bedell Park nearly every day since it opened. I have seen wonderful sights of wild life from deer to hatching baby turtles. I regret that I did not send her a personal thank-you years ago..something that I always intended to do.

My condolences to the Bedell family and thank you for your generosity in providing such a wonderful park for our enjoyment.

Sincerely,

Jan Pierce Lee

Jan Pierce Lee - July 20, 2017 at 11:00 AM

SN

“ Shirley Nellis lit a candle in memory of Elinor M. Bedell



Shirley Nellis - July 18, 2017 at 09:21 PM

MS

“ I join with so many others who appreciated the genuineness of Elinor. She touched many lives in such positive and caring ways. Heaven is Blessed with her presence ... and we will see her again... and Forever that time! Jesus Promises! God bless each of her Loved Ones. In shared Friendship & Faith, Marilyn Strickland



Marilyn Strickland - July 18, 2017 at 06:18 PM

RC

“ Berk, Tom, and family: So sorry to hear of your loss. Sharon and I send our thoughts and prayers. Elinor made difference for the good in our community just as the whole Bedell family has. Ron & Sharon Crowley

Ron Crowley - March 12, 2017 at 05:07 PM

CY

“ Berk and family, I'm so saddened to learn of Elinor's death. She was one special lady. She took me under her wings when I moved to DC in 1977 and I will never forget her for all the wonderful things she did for me and for the rest of humanity. Berk, Joanne, Ken, and Tom and families, you have my deepest sympathy, My heart goes out to each of you. I know how much she'll be missed. Cindy (Tholkes) Yaworske



Cindy Tholkes Yaworske - March 09, 2017 at 10:04 AM

MB

“ *Mel & Clarys Berryhill lit a candle in memory of Elinor M. Bedell*



Mel & Clarys Berryhill - March 08, 2017 at 05:07 PM

JC

“ *Jeff & Linda Christoffer sent a virtual gift in memory of Elinor M. Bedell*



Jeff & Linda Christoffer - March 06, 2017 at 06:48 PM

CW

“ *Connie/Bill Wymer lit a candle in memory of Elinor M. Bedell*



Connie/Bill Wymer - March 06, 2017 at 02:24 PM

CS

“ *I will always remember my wife and I being invited to an evening Dinner at Elinor's home the first year I joined Berkeley and Co in 1968 for a great pheasant meal with all the trimmings! Elinor was so gracious and kind to us and it was very special! She and Berk were always supportive of me and my family!*

Chuck Skogerboe

Chuck Skogerboe - March 06, 2017 at 01:22 AM

LD

“ *The John Van Dyke family send our heartfelt sympathy to the entire Bedell family. John often shared childhood memories of times spent at the Bedell home and what a special mom Elinor was to her own children but, to their friends as well. What a blessing for her to have touched so many lives. You are in our thoughts and prayers.*
With much love,
Lauren, Grace, Lindsay & Kelsey

Lauren Van Dyke - March 05, 2017 at 11:32 AM

EL

“ *Eileen And Mike Lamer lit a candle in memory of Elinor M. Bedell*



Eileen and Mike Lamer - March 04, 2017 at 08:39 PM

EL

Deepest condolences to the family. Mike and Eileen Lamer

Eileen and Mike Lamer - March 04, 2017 at 08:40 PM

DB

Dee and I wish to extend our heartfelt sympathy to the Bedell family. Many fond memories of the Bedell's when we resided in the 60's and 70's in Spirit Lake.

Del Block - March 06, 2017 at 10:40 AM

TE

“ Terrye sent a virtual gift in memory of Elinor M. Bedell



Terrye - March 04, 2017 at 08:35 PM

MF

“ We extend sincere sympathy to Berkley and Family on the loss of Elinor. She is the epitome of a life well lived. May wonderful memories be your treasure. Bill and Marcie Frevert

Marcie Frevert - March 04, 2017 at 08:14 PM

JB

“ I remember being in Methodist Youth Fellowship and we would sometimes meet at Berk and Elinor's house. She always made the best hot chocolate and cookies. She will definitely be missed. Thoughts and prayers to the family.

JoAnn Kramme Bergeson

JoAnn Kramme Bergeson - March 04, 2017 at 07:53 PM

KS

“ Karen Sikora lit a candle in memory of Elinor M. Bedell



Karen Sikora - March 04, 2017 at 06:46 PM

MH

“ Our sympathy to Berk and his family, she will be missed by many. TJ and Maxine Huntsinger



Maxine Huntsinger - March 04, 2017 at 03:59 PM

DS

“ Our condolences on the loss of Elinor. We always admired her and enjoyed visiting with her. The state park is a special gift to our area!

Dick & Marsha Swanson - March 04, 2017 at 02:33 PM

BW

“ Bev And Vern Wittler lit a candle in memory of Elinor M. Bedell



Bev and Vern Wittler - March 04, 2017 at 02:08 PM

PP

“ Pat & Judy Peddycoart lit a candle in memory of Elinor M. Bedell



Pat & Judy Peddycoart - March 04, 2017 at 12:51 PM

KS

“ I'm so sorry for the Bedell family's loss. Our families shared many memories, and Elinor was a dear friend of my mom. I'm sure they're catching up now! Treasure the memories ...

Kathy (Ross) Saunders - March 03, 2017 at 02:29 PM

RM

“ Rebecca Monson lit a candle in memory of Elinor M. Bedell



Rebecca Monson - March 03, 2017 at 10:45 AM

RI

“ Ruth Ihnen lit a candle in memory of Elinor M. Bedell



Ruth Ihnen - March 03, 2017 at 09:38 AM

DN

“ Sending condolences and loving thoughts to Berkley and family. It was always a pleasure to be in the company of Elinor. With sincere sympathy,
Dave and Judy Nixon

David E Nixon - March 03, 2017 at 08:40 AM

KW

“*Kristie And Tim Wintz sent a virtual gift in memory of Elinor M. Bedell*



Kristie and Tim Wintz - March 03, 2017 at 08:00 AM

CM

“*Elinor was a wonderful lady with leaving wonderful memories for us and many others. .Sending our Love and Sympathy to the Bedell family.*



Chuck & Donna Tielbur Milford - March 02, 2017 at 10:21 PM

MJ

“*Marv And Fran Jungjohan lit a candle in memory of Elinor M. Bedell*



Marv and Fran Jungjohan - March 02, 2017 at 08:12 PM

PT

“*Paula E Krogman Tietz lit a candle in memory of Elinor M. Bedell*



Paula E Krogman Tietz - March 02, 2017 at 07:57 PM

LL

“ Laurie Langel lit a candle in memory of Elinor M. Bedell



Laurie Langel - March 02, 2017 at 07:03 PM

RM

“ Reba Dodds Munson lit a candle in memory of Elinor M. Bedell



Reba Dodds Munson - March 02, 2017 at 06:56 PM

SS

“ Sharon Sauck lit a candle in memory of Elinor M. Bedell



Sharon Sauck - March 02, 2017 at 05:55 PM

JL

“ Jeri Lowry lit a candle in memory of Elinor M. Bedell



Jeri Lowry - March 02, 2017 at 05:53 PM

LM

“ *Elinor was a lovely, lovely lady. She was always so welcoming and gracious to my entire family. She helped make the world a better place, indeed. Our love and prayers go out to all of the family at this difficult time.*

Linda (Weik) Moore & Bill Moore of Spirit Lake, Iowa

linda moore - March 02, 2017 at 02:59 PM