

# McDonald woman chosen resident of the month

By Karen Krien

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Irene Kehlbeck is the June Good Samaritan Village Resident of the Month.

Irene was the second child of Matthais and Sophie Goltl. She was born on a farm 7 miles northeast of Ludell on Feb. 6, 1912.

There had been a drought which was broken by a blizzard. Following the blizzard, the minister came over bad roads to baptize her.

Irene and her sister Helen liked walking to their grandparents' farm — often without permission. The Goltl farm was 3/4 of a mile but their grandparents home was a mile further.

Their mother would scold them and warned them that the "boogie man" would get them. They didn't take her seriously until the time she dressed up in overalls and carried a pitchfork, then met them coming home. No one knows how she got back home before they did but the girls didn't go again.

The girls were given the responsibility of getting the cows from the pasture. Whenever they came across snakes, they killed them with heavy sticks.

In the pasture, there was an old dug well about 5-feet across with a plank laying over it. The girls walked across it without ever a thought.

Helen was held out of school a year so she could go with Irene. Before starting school, their mother told them they needed to learn their numbers and their ABCs as an entry to school. So on the first day of school, the girls kept wondering when the teacher would ask them to recite. Finally, they looked at each other, then, in unison, counted to 100 and said their ABCs. Irene later said they were glad to get it over with.

The girls never knew school as supposed to start at a certain time. They played in the pasture, arriving at school whenever they felt like it. Their mother sent cornbread and warned them to eat it, but they dumped it behind a cactus on the way from school. One time their mother was in the pasture and found a dog feeding on cornbread.

They attended two different rural one-room schools. Then, their father decided they needed to attend parochial school so built a house in Ludell and moved the family there.

In that school, the German chil-



Irene Kehlbeck

dren looked down on the Hungarians (which the Goltl children were). These school years weren't altogether good times. After confirmation when they finished seventh grade, they were sent to the public school in Ludell. From Ludell, Irene went to Herndon High School for two years.

When Irene enrolled in high school, she gave "Normal Training" as a preference. Normal Training was the teacher training and if she completed the training in high school, she wouldn't have to go to college to become a teacher.

Her junior year, Irene attended Atwood High School with her sister Esther. Her dad never taught her to drive but he told her to get in the Model T Ford and drive Esther and a friend, Margaret, to school.

Down the road, Margaret asked if she was going to shift gears. All the way, Irene worried about how she would be able to get stopped, but fortunately, got the Ford stopped just short of a wall.

In 1929, the family moved to a farm south of McDonald where Irene finished high school, completing her Normal Training requirements. That was the last time the training was offered in high school. Her sisters went on to college to get their training.

Because of the large number of teachers, it was difficult to get a job. John Headrick took a liking to her. After a meeting, he brought a contract to her.

There were five Headrick girls in the school. Her salary was \$90 a month but, by taking in children

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IRENE KEHLBECK holds her cake at her birthday party.

from another district, she got another \$10.

She had 24 pupils in the eight grades. The school was new and relatively modern with a basement and furnace. She was the first teacher in that school.

She stayed at the Arthur David Farm, 1/4 mile from the school, and paid them \$1 a day for five days a week.

The next year, she took a teaching job closer to home so didn't have to board with anyone. There were fewer students but her salary was \$85 a month.

When she started teaching, her mother expected her to buy things for the house so Irene paid for a rug and living room furniture. Her dad also borrowed money from her, but paid it back.

Irene also paid for her own tonsillectomy. A couple of girls went with her to a fly-by-night doctor in Atwood who took the tonsils right out and sent her home. The surgery took a long time to heal and she was in bed for quite awhile.

Irene was unsure of her plans for the future and turned Ernie Kehlbeck's proposal down several times. Ernie was a handsome bachelor, but bashful, so wasn't going to ask her again until Art Antholz sent him back to the Goltl farm. Her indecision about teaching or marriage was settle then.

On one of their dates, they went to the Goodland fair but other dates were usually movies or going to Luther League, which was the main social way for young people to get together.

Irene and Ernie were married Oct. 12, 1932, at St. John Lutheran

Church, Bird City. The wedding supper was held at the Goltl farm and the newlyweds spent their first night there with Irene's sisters snickering in the room next to them.

The next day, they went to the Lou Antholz farm that Ernie was renting. It was in the middle of corn husking season. Ernie was disappointed that Irene couldn't shuck corn. She had been her father's right-hand man so he had expected her to know how to do everything on the farm.

In 1934, they purchased a farm 4 miles south of McDonald. After many years, they sold the farm to Kent Banister and moved in 1987 to the home originally built by Fritz Kehlbeck, Ernie's brother.

Through the years, Irene was active in the church. Her daughter, Nadine, said she touched the lives of many young people by teaching Sunday school. She also spent many hours quilting both with the quilting ladies and at home, making quilts for Lutheran World Relief.

She was a member of the church womens' groups, leading Bible studies both there and in adult Sunday school. She loved to garden and joined the McDonald Garden Club.

The Kehlbecks had one daughter and five grandchildren. Ernie died in Dec. 20, 1997.

# Music concert set for Sunday, July 3

An inspirational concert is planned for 7:30 p.m. Sunday, July 8, at Peace Lutheran Church.

The Ambassadors Music Ministry Team from the Association Free Lutheran Bible School in Minneapolis, Minn., will present the free concert and the public is welcome to attend.

The Ambassadors feature Christian music ranging from traditional to contemporary. The 60-minute concert includes more than 10 songs, two testimonies of

faith and a brief message.

Association Free Lutheran Bible School is a two-year, college-level school of the Bible, founded in 1967. The campus is in suburban Plymouth, Minn., about 15 minutes west of downtown Minneapolis.

The team includes five members from Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota.

The Ambassadors will travel for 10 weeks through out the United States visiting more than 40 churches and camps from coast to coast.

## Introducing

### Lydia Grace Mekelburg

Greg and Julie Mekelburg would like to announce the arrival of their daughter, Lydia Grace. She was born on May 8, 2007, at Yuma District Hospital. She weighed 8 pounds, 14 ounces and was 19 inches long.

Lydia has a brother, Brandon, and a sister, Kristyn. Grandparents are Roy and Charlotte Mekelburg of Yuma, and the late Dan and Marcia Pinkham. Great grandparents are Maxine Mekelburg of Yuma, Marie Wendt of Salina and Madelene Pinkham of Overland Park.



Mekelburg

## St. Francis News

Alumni guests of Harvey and Carol Forsythe were George and Mary Ann Bersonnet, Gloria and Paul Riedel and Alice and George Ford. Others visiting were Lyle and Betty Lukas, Gary and Carol Rogers, Billy and Geri Lampe, Natalie and Makayla Rogers, Gordon and Ann Rogers and Lee and Delphine Norton.

Barb Stevanson of Austin, Texas, was a recent visitor of her mom, Wilma Lampe, from Thursday to Sunday. She attended her high school class's alumni activities while here.

Friday evening they met in the backyard of Tim and Robin Burr with about 25 in attendance enjoying the evening.

Saturday night they took in the banquet and photo session at the

high school followed by visiting at Riverside.

Milton and Betty Lampe drove to Mankato on Thursday, June 21, for a U.S. 36 Highway Association meeting on Friday.

On their return trip, they enjoyed watching their grandson, Travis Grizzell of Hays perform in a musical fable of Broadway "Guys and Dolls" at the Thomas More Prep-Marian High School auditorium. He had the leading role.

Debbie Grizzell and friend Tacey Bevan of Macksville joined them at the performance.

Brian and Shirley Scoby of Hays were house guests of Dolores Wiley for the high school reunion.

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