

Obituaries

Helen Clara Douthit

Aug. 3, 1911 - Nov. 27, 2003

Helen Clara Douthit died on Thanksgiving Day, Nov. 27, 2003, at the Good Samaritan Village, St. Francis, Kan., at the age of 92. Helen was born on Aug. 3, 1911, on a farm north of Beardsley, to Rudolph and Vincentia Pochop, immigrants from Moravia, Czechoslovakia. They had a large family and she was the second of nine children. She was born three months premature with no fingernails and very thin skin.

She was preceded in death by her husband, James W. Douthit, her brother, Vincent Pochop and sisters, Mary Lorens and Agnes Pochop.

She is survived by her five children, Emily Peter of Denver, Walter Douthit of St. Francis, Roger Douthit and wife, Myra of St. Francis, Dr. Rudolph Douthit and wife, Pat of Berthoud, Colo., and Stephen Douthit and wife, Melva of St. Francis; 17 grandchildren, Deborah, Mark, Jennifer, Michelle, Teresa, Chad, Megan, Jason, Jared, Michael, Amy, Stephanie, Ana, Erica, Margo, Courtney and Thomas; nine great-grandchildren, Adam, Trevor, Sarah, Christopher, Eric, Libby, Jack, Tia and Emily; her sisters, Angie Demmer of Lakewood, Colo., Margaret Faimon of Stratton, Neb., her brothers, Frank Pochop and wife Elizabeth, Victor Pochop and his wife, Lucy, Ralph Pochop and wife, Jean, all of Atwood; many nieces, nephews and a host of friends.

Helen's first year of high school was spent at Holy Trinity Catholic Boarding school in Brainard, Neb. She then attended and graduated from Stratton High School in Stratton. After graduation she attended nursing school and began her career by caring for the ill in people's homes. She was also a nurse at the St. Francis hospital working with Dr. Peck. Nursing suited her loving and caring nature, and she was endeared by those for whom she cared.

As a nurse she met Jim while caring for him in the St. Francis Hospital. They were married for 48 years. Being a wife, mother and homemaker filled her life with joy. Helen's life centered around her family and her faith. She enjoyed being outside and tending to her garden, her flowers and her animals - especially her beloved dog Snoopy. Her spending money came from raising chickens and selling eggs.

She also enjoyed playing pinocle, going for Sunday afternoon rides and visiting family and friends. She loved to laugh, had a witty sense of humor and always had little ditties to share with all.

Helen was a very strong and religious person. She was always looking out for those less fortunate. She noticed those that needed to be noticed, those that others overlooked - the handicapped, the needy or those less fortunate - always treating them with dignity, when others might not. She endured many illnesses, always fighting back and living up to the words written about her in high school: "A live wire never gets stepped on."

Helen will be missed by her family and friends.

Contributions can be made to the St. Francis Catholic Church, Cheyenne County Hospital or the St. Francis emergency medical technicians. A scripture and rosary service was held at 7 p.m. on Sunday, Nov. 30, at Knodel Funeral Home.

Funeral services celebrating her life were at 10:30 a.m. on Monday, Dec. 1, at St. Francis Catholic Church with Father Beryl Gibson as celebrant.

Honorary pallbearers were siblings: Frank Pochop, Victor Pochop, Ralph Pochop, Angie Demmer and Margaret Faimon.

Casket bearers were grandchildren: Mark Peter, Jason Douthit, Michael Douthit, Jared Douthit, Chad Douthit, Ana Douthit.

Interment was in the St. Francis Cemetery, St. Francis.

Arrangements by Knodel Funeral Home, St. Francis

Clarence Wayne Ritchey

March 24, 1921 - Nov. 24, 2003

Wayne Ritchey was born March 24, 1921, to George Grover and Ellen (Roach) Ritchey in Cheyenne County, Kan.

He was a resident of Cheyenne County for most of his life. He was 9 years old at the time of his mother's death and 14 years old at the time of his father's death.

He enlisted in the Army in March 1942, and was sent to California and then to Washington and back to California. He was sent overseas in September 1942, to Kauai, Hawaii, then to Guadalcanal, then on to New Guinea, then to the Isle of New Britain, back to New Guinea, on to the Philippine Island of Luzon, then to the Isle of Mindanao until the war ended. He contracted malaria while overseas.

On Jan. 5, 1948, he married Rosella Goldie Tucker in Benkelman, Neb., after an honorable discharge and release from Fitzsimmons Hospital in Denver, Colo.

He worked at the Mills Ranch and then he spent 35 years as county engineer in Cheyenne County, retiring in 1986. He spent up to the last year helping his sons with projects at home. He continued practicing land surveying until he retired from that in March of 1999.

He and Rosella had five children: Elaine, Calvin, LaVern, Rodney and Kevin. Grandchildren include Annette Tomastik, Wendy Shearin, David Bird, Scott Ritchey, Michelle Ritchey, Justin Ritchey, Marissa Ritchey, Mercedes Ritchey, Kalin Ritchey and Tasha Ritchey and great-grandchildren Katrina Shearin, Christopher Shearin, Austin Ritchey, Mackenzie Ritchey, Raquel Bird and Madeline Bird.

Wayne was surrounded by his wife, sister Bonnie and children at the time of his death. He was a patient at the Cheyenne County Hospital for his last week with pneumonia and he was also battling cancer.

He was preceded in death by his parents, George Grover and Ellen (Roach) Ritchey; a sister Dorothy; brothers, Marlin, Tom, Orral and Glen; in-laws Dowell Henry and Ella (Fister) Tucker; sisters-in-law Mildred Ritchey, Betty Tucker,

Lucille Tucker, Ida Tucker and Dorothy Lundquist; brothers-in-law Oscar Straub, Alvie Tucker, David Tucker, Harold Peter, Hurb Rose, Howard Irwin, Roy Reutzel and Buck Lovenburg.

He leaves by his death wife Rosella; daughter Elaine; sons Calvin, LaVern and Jackie, Rodney, Kevin and Cathy; brother Neal and Lucille Ritchey; sister Bonnie Stebbins; sisters-in-law Sylvia Ritchey and Floris Raile; aunt Goldie Ott, brothers-in-law Kenneth Tucker and John Tucker and sisters-in-law, Allie Townsend, Naomi DeBoer, Joyce Lovenburg, Doris Edwards, Eunice Tucker, Alice Straub and Leota Hunt; many nieces and nephews, special friends and acquaintances.

Funeral services were held Nov. 28, at the First Christian Church in St. Francis with Reverend John Bartlett officiating.

Honorary pallbearers were Alvin and Marie Holzwarth; Elton and Ella Mae Keller, Ruben and Bernice Bandel, Charlie and Eloise Holliday, Wayne Goodell, Ray and JoAnn Lee and Swede and Alberta Calnon.

Casket bearers were Garrett Sundstrom, David Bird, Sonny Ritchey, Darrell Ritchey, Mike Straub, Michael Hanson.

Interment was in the St. Francis Cemetery. Military graveside service was by Fort Riley Squad.

Memorials may be given to the Christian Church and the Cheyenne County Hospital

Arrangements by Knodel Funeral Home, St. Francis.

Mary Foutz

Born Jan. 11, 1916 - Nov. 9, 2003

Mary Foutz, 87, Akron, Colo., died Sunday at the Washington County Nursing Home in Akron.

Mrs. Foutz was born Jan. 11, 1916, to Seth Adelbert and Kate Rosetta (Milligan) Ross in a log house built by her father near Hotchkiss. Her aunt, Mary Comstock (her mother's sister), who lived only a few miles away, was the midwife who delivered her without the assistance of a doctor.

When she was an infant, Mrs. Foutz and her family moved from Hotchkiss in a covered wagon and settled in western Kansas where she spent her childhood years. Here she attended a one-room country school for eight years and graduated from St. Francis High School in 1934. She continued her education throughout the years and graduated from the University of Northern Colorado in 1961. She taught school in and around Colorado and Kansas for a total of 35 years.

She married Ernest Confer on May 31, 1940, in St. Francis, Kan., where they ran an ice plant. In 1947, they moved to Anton, Colo., where her husband farmed and she taught school. He died in 1980. On June 19, 1983, she married Lyle Foutz and they lived on a farm south of Akron.

Mrs. Foutz was an avid reader and solver of crossword puzzles, loved to play cards and board games, loved to fish and loved all kinds of sports.

She is survived by her daughter, Betty Dolifka of Flagler; one son, Larry Confer of Acton, Calif.; one sister, Edith Moore of Avon Park, Fla.; five step-children, five grandchildren, 10 great-grandchildren and three great-great-grandchildren.

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Mrs. Foutz was preceded in death by her parents, both of her husbands, Ernest Confer and Lyle Foutz; a daughter, Alverna Garner; eight brothers, Leonard, Myron, Elmer, Leslie, Eddie, Louie, Clarence and Albert; a sister, Emma and a half-sister, Ida Waters.

Funeral services were held Thursday at 10:30 a.m. from the United Methodist Church in Akron with Reverend Ramon V. Robledo officiating.

Burial followed in the Akron Cemetery with Brenner Funeral Home in charge of arrangements.

Memorials in memory of Mrs. Foutz may be made to the Washington County Nursing Home of the Akron United Methodist Church.

Dottie Doreen Barbour

Jan. 10, 1927 - Nov. 20, 2003

Dottie Doreen (Burnham) Barbour, 76, of Yuba City, Calif., died in Yuba City on Nov. 20, 2003. She was born Jan. 10, 1927, in St. Francis, Kan. She lived in Yuba City for the past three years.

Dottie graduated from high school in McCook, Neb., and was a secretary/bookkeeper for Our Lady of the Mountains Catholic Church in Ashland, Calif.

Survivors include sons Robert Campbell of Redding, Calif., and William Campbell of Roseville, Calif.; daughters Jeanne Bravos of Yuba City and Suzanne Violl of Camas, Wash.; stepsons William Barbour of Boulder City, Nev.; and Robert Barbour of San Jose, Calif.; brother Robert Burnham of Lake San Marcos, Calif.; nine grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

A private family Rosary and Mass was held Monday, Nov. 24, at St. Joseph Catholic Church. Inurnment will be private.

Memorials may be sent to The Fountains, 1260, Yuba City, CA 95991.

Norma N. Pizel

Aug. 4, 1925 - Nov. 24, 2003

Former longtime Sherman County, Kan., resident Norma N. Pizel 78, died Monday, Nov. 24, 2003, at her daughter's reside in Wichita, Kan., where she had been living for the past 1 1/2 years.

She was born Aug. 4, 1925, in Cheyenne County, the daughter of Christina (Walz) and Henry John Richers. She attended rural schools in Cheyenne County.

On April 11, 1944, she and Chester N. Pizel were married at Mineral Wells, Texas.

The family farmed on their homestead, which was 14 miles north of Kanorado, until moving to Goodland in the early 1980s.

Her memberships included the Emmanuel Lutheran Church in Goodland.

Preceding her in death were her husband Chester N. Pizel, who died Sept. 1, 2000, and her son-in-law Carlos Craig.

Surviving family members include her son Eugene Pizel of Dallas, Texas; her daughter Brenda Craig of Wichita; two step-grandchildren James Craig of Moundridge and Julie McClure of McPherson; one great-granddaughter Bailey McClure of McPherson; three sisters Elvera Neitzel of St. Francis; Arlene Bruder and her husband, Don, of Bird City and Viola Wright of Fort Morgan, Colo.; and one brother Elmer Richers of Golden, Colo.

The funeral service was Monday, Dec. 1, at Emmanuel Lutheran Church in Goodland with Pastor Scott Grimshaw officiating. Burial followed in the Goodland Cemetery.

Memorials may be designated to the Emmanuel Lutheran Church and may be left at or mailed to Koons Funeral Home, 211 North Main, Goodland, KS 67735-1555.

Corinne O'Kelley

Jan. 12, 1927 - Nov. 11, 2003

Corinne Elizabeth Bartholoma O'Kelley, 76, a former resident of this area, died Nov. 11, 2003, at her rural West Union, S.C., home.

Corinne was born Jan. 12, 1927, in a sod house in northwest Cheyenne County, Kan., to William and Genevieve Brooks Bartholoma. She attended District 60 country elementary school, Haigler (Neb.) High School and Chadron State College. She taught in a rural Cheyenne County school.

Corinne and John O'Kelley were married at Crawford, Neb., and six children were born to this union. In 1952, the couple with three small children moved to South Carolina, John's home state. Corinne was a devoted wife and mother.

Preceding Corinne in death were her husband, John; daughter, Linda; brother, Lloyd; sister, Esther Krien and her parents.

Surviving are her children: John O'Kelley (Francis) of Carthage, Mo.; Stanley, Jimmy (Wanda) of Salem, S.C.; Betty Moss (Wayne) of Salem, Wash.; and Sharon O'Kelley of Yelm, Wash.; brothers: Thomas Bartholoma of Aberdeen, Idaho.; Kenneth Bartholoma (Bea) of Prescott Valley, Ariz.; sisters, Rita Bader (Paul) of Valentine, Neb., and Alma Brown (Larry) of Raymore, Mo.; 11 grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

The funeral service was held Nov. 14, at Wesleyan Church with burial at Oconee Memorial Park in Seneca, S.C.

Water conservation and water supply to be studied

While groundwater management is the primary theme of the bi-annual Ogallala Aquifer symposium, several agriculture producers, as well as, private, academic and government entities will focus discuss water supply and water conservation issues for northeast Colorado, southwest Nebraska and northwest Kansas. The symposium, set for Monday, Feb. 23, will be held at the high school auditorium in Wray, Colo.

During these dry years, it is appropriate to examine and understand the various short- and long-term impacts of water conservation. Highlighting the current conservation programs and irrigation management tools, and their impact on the soil moisture and crop production will do this.

With the drought impacting the residential and recreational users of water, in addition to the agricultural production in the western states, water rights, water storage and other water issues are reaching the "boiling point." All three states are finding their state governments inundated with legislative proposals on these

topics. Representatives from the Colorado, Kansas and Nebraska Farm Bureaus will provide an update on current legislative trends and efforts that are driving the legislative initiatives.

A session featuring Hal Simpson (state engineer, Colorado); Ann Bleed (assistant state engineer, Nebraska); and Dave Barfield (assistant state engineer, Kansas), will give an update on the Republican River litigation, as this multi-year effort is nearing a conclusion. Highlighting this session will be impacts and management of the three states' agreement on the Republican River.


A current report on the water supply will come from two sources, Virginia McGuire, from the United States Geological Survey offices in Lincoln, Neb., where the national database is housed, will discuss the declines in the Central Great Plains Aquifer (a.k.a the High Plains Aquifer or the Ogallala Aquifer) Nolan Doesken, Colorado Assistant Climatologist, will highlight the impacts of the weather on the water supply.

Kevin Dennehey, of the United States Geological Survey offices in Denver, Colo., will report on the National Water Quality Assessment study. Mr. Dennehey and associates are implementing the third leg of the study on the Northern High Plains Aquifer, or the region of Colorado, Nebraska and northwestern Kansas.

The offices have already begun this eight-state study in the Southern and Middle High Plains Aquifer regions. A panel of agriculture producers will wrap up the program by briefly describing their water management, tillage practices and use of technology as they work toward sustainable and profitable production.

Registration brochures and other information about the symposium can be requested by contacting the Golden Plains Area Cooperative Extension office in Akron, Colo., at (970) 345-2287 or by e-mail at washing@coop.ext.colostate.edu; or by contacting Joel Schneekloth, chairman of the Ogallala Aquifer Symposium at (970) 345-0508 or by

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