

Obituaries

Dessie Elizabeth Leaming

A centurion, **Dessie Leaming** has completed her journey which began on March 12, 1906, near Walnut Grove, Mo., where she was born to James Oren Hayter and Orpha (Brashers) Hayter in their home.

We trust she is now reunited with many friends and family members including her parents; her sisters, Tennie Harman and Nellie Bird; her brothers, James Jack Menan and Raymond Buster Loren Hayter; her husband, George Monroe Leaming; her daughter, Carolyn Dawn Drury; her daughter-in-law, Cheryl Lynn (Clark) Leaming; and her grandson, Brett Christopher Leaming.

Dessie left behind numerous friends and family members including her younger brother, Albert Oren Hayter and Bonnie; her sister-in-law, Nema Hayter; her son, George Denton Leaming and Diane; her son-in-law, Ray Drury Jr. and Elizabeth; her grandchildren, Ray Drury III and Rita, Jeff Drury and Jill, Celena Smith and Doug, Chad Leaming and Jason Raynor and Debra; six great-grandchildren; and two great-great-grandchildren.

Dessie attended Draughons Business College in Springfield after graduating from Walnut Grove High School in 1925. She was employed by the Farmers Exchange in Lockwood, Mo., and spent most of her life in Lockwood.

Dessie and George were married on Sept. 16, 1934, about six months after she was seriously injured in a train accident on the main street of Lockwood. The accident resulted in the loss of her right leg but she saved the life of her niece, Jonell Harman, and was awarded the Andrew Carnegie Foundation Hero Medal and a \$500 cash award. Jonell is one of Dessies many nieces, nephews and cousins who have been close to her no matter where they live. Dessie and George purchased a business in Lockwood and created Leaming Motor Service in 1940, which they owned and operated until selling it in 1974.

Socially active, Dessie was a charter member of the Marthas (a prominent local bridge club) and the Lockwood Business and Professional Women Chapter, selected as the woman of the year in 1964, by the BPW. She was ordained an elder in the Lockwood Presbyterian Church and held a position on the Older Adults Transportation System Board. Until recently, it was her habit to ride the OATS bus to Greenfield on Thursday for dinner at the Senior Citizens Center followed by games and shopping. Every day was Independence Day with Dessie as she strived for as much independence as life would allow. Her many good friends and relatives helped her immeasurably in this endeavor.

Her daughter-in-law, Diane Leaming, tended to her faithfully since October and Dessie chose to become a resident at the Good Shepherd Nursing Home in December, where she spent her final days. Two days before her death, she repeated the 23rd Psalm and sang Jesus Loves Me. Diane and George Denton were at her side when she breathed her last.

Services will be held 2 p.m. Friday, Jan. 26, in Lockwood United Methodist Church with Dr. Troy Morgan officiating. Burial will follow in **Dudenville Cemetery**. The family will receive friends Thursday evening from 6:30 until 8:30 p.m. in the funeral chapel.

Memorial contributions, in lieu of flowers, may be made to the St. Judes Childrens Hospital, the Lockwood Methodist Church, the Presbyterian Churches, the Good Shepherd Nursing Home, the Dade County Senior Citizens Center, the Older Adults Transportation System or any other beneficial organization.

Services are under the care of Lockwood Funeral Chapel.
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