

Wilhelmina "Billie" Schuning, 72

July 27, 1928 – Nov. 19, 2000

COUNCIL BLUFFS – July 27, 1928, Herman and Helen J. Hoepfner, better known as Dick and June, became the parents of their first born daughter on the family farm six miles south of Shelby, Pleasant Township, Pottawattamie County. She was named Wilhelmina Ann after her grandmother, Minnie Hoepfner, and was given the nickname Billie Ann, as she was known to everyone thereafter. She was baptized and confirmed in the Shelby Lutheran Church. She attended grade school just west of the family farm at Pleasant Township School #7. In the fall of 1941, she entered Shelby High School where she graduated in 1945. After finishing school in Omaha, Billie worked for Cogley Clinic in Council Bluffs, and at Swanson Foods in Omaha.

In 1950, she married Delmar "Pete" Schuning from Minden, where they lived after their marriage. In 1952, Billie gave birth to a son, Ricky Dell. Ricky died of diabetes three years later, and later that year her husband, Pete, was killed when the road grader he operated was struck by a train. In 1956, she moved to the San Francisco Bay area of California where family relatives lived.

In 1960, she met and married Thomas McKinzy and lived in the Richmond, CA area until Tom's retirement in 1980. They moved back to Iowa in 1981 and lived in Neola and later moved to Minden, where they lived until Tom's death in 1987. Billie worked as a volunteer and a switchboard operator at Jennie Edmundson Hospital for many years.

She married Kenny Schuning in 1993. They lived in Council Bluffs, where Billie joined St. John Lutheran Church. Billie was diagnosed with breast cancer in 1997, and it metastasized in the bones in 1998. She suffered a stroke in February of this year. She suffered another stroke in May and spent many days in Jennie Edmundson Hospital. She was taken to the Mayo Clinic in October and was scheduled for chemo treatments at University of Nebraska Medical Center. She took ill three weeks ago and was admitted to Jennie Edmundson Hospital once more. After two days at Jennie, she was transferred to University of Nebraska Medical Center where she was given chemo and plasma exchange treatments until suffering another stroke Nov. 19. Billie Ann died in a coma the same day.

She is survived by her husband, Kenny Schuning of Council Bluffs; two brothers, Robert Hoepfner of Casper, WY and Richard Hoepfner of Council Bluffs, along with nieces and nephews and other relatives.

Funeral services were held Nov. 22, 2000, at St. John Lutheran Church in Council Bluffs with Pastor E.A. Hering officiating. Casket bearers were Cathy Straight, Jan Schneckloth, Jennifer Van Cleave, Monnet Hoepfner, Kelly Hoepfner and Stacy Ring. Knutson Funeral Home in charge of arrangements.