



Dorothy Dvorak

May 16, 1908 - February 17, 2005

Dorothy Edith Dvorak, 96, of Glendive, died Wednesday, February 9, 2005 at the Glendive Medical Center Extended Care Facility. A Celebration of her life will be held at 10:00 A.M., Thursday, February 17, 2005 in the Chapel of the Silvernale-Silha Funeral Home in Glendive with Celebrant Sandy Silha officiating. Interment will be in the Dawson County Cemetery in Glendive with graveside services conducted by Pastor Dan Pust. Silvernale-Silha Funeral Home of Glendive is entrusted with arrangements. Dorothy was born on May 16, 1908 in Decatur, Illinois, the daughter of Harry Everett and Dolly Mae (Ruthrauff) Wilkins. The family later moved to Montana where she attended elementary schools in Wibaux and Glendive. She later attended beauty school and eventually worked for the Parker Pen Company in Wisconsin. Dorothy married Lauren Helvik on June 29, 1929 in Rockford, Illinois. Lauren died in 1949 and Dorothy returned to Glendive where, with the help of her two brothers and their families, she built, opened and operated the Runway Drive Inn. This was her second experience with operating a "food service" establishment. When only 16, she had a roadside snack shop named "Dorothy's Place" at the exit to Hodges along the "old red trail" between Glendive and Wibaux! Dorothy married a friend from childhood, James Dvorak, on September 22, 1951. They ran the Drive Inn together until it was sold. She then worked at Van Dykes Grocery, Purity Dairy and finally Wagner Heating and Plumbing. James passed away in 1992. Dorothy had enjoyed bowling and a variety of crafts while her health permitted. She was an active

member of the Women of the Moose where she held the offices of Senior Regent and Recorder. She was also a member of the Glendive Elks Lodge #1324 Does. In addition to her husbands, she was preceded in death by her brother, Ray Wilkins, and his wife Winona, her sons-in-law, Chuck Copping and Bert White and her grandson, Mike Copping. Survivors include her daughter, Delores Copping of Glendive; one-step daughter, Louise White of Reno, Nevada; a stepson, Don (Florence) Dvorak of Columbia Falls, Montana; a brother, Harry (Marge) Wilkins of Billings, Montana; and a sister, Betty (Bert) Ostler of Billings, Montana. She also leaves behind nine grandchildren, numerous great grandchildren and seven great great grandchildren. Eulogy by Celebrant Sandy Silha: "We live on in the lives of those we touch. We live on in the lives of those who love us." Dorothy Dvorak will live on in the generations of family that have experienced her. It is her 96 years of love and kindness that have been so significant to family, friends and community. Mix into these 96 years Dorothy's great capacity to enjoy life and have fun, her independent spirit and her ability, as great-grandson, Jason puts it, to have had an "uplifting" effect on those around her. Dorothy Dvorak began life in Decatur, Illinois, on May 16, 1908, the eldest of four children born to Harry and Dolly Wilkins. Dorothy moved with her parents to eastern Montana when she was quite young. Dorothy's mother and father worked for the railroad and moved to different stops between Wibaux and Miles City. Dorothy attended elementary schools in Wibaux and Glendive but did not go to high school. When Dorothy was 16, the family was in Hodges. Her father and grandfather built a small roadside snack shop at the Hodge's exit that Dorothy operated named "Dorothy's Place." Dorothy sold sandwiches, beverages and ice cream to travelers on the "old red trail", the scorrio covered highway between Glendive and Wibaux .Dorothy would ride her horse, Steamboat, to the snack shop each day. The shop had no electricity, so to keep the ice cream cold, a deep hole was dug in the ground to put the ice cream and ice in. Dorothy also sold dried rattlesnake skins and rattles. Her sister Betty remembers having to go on the snake hunts. Her dad killed the snakes, cut off

the rattles and dried the skins on broomstick handles. These skins and rattles were a popular item with tourists passing through. But life wasn't all work and no play. Dorothy loved going to community dances at Hodges, and she and her dad both loved a good schottish. Sister Betty tells of one of these good times, when Dorothy arrived home after her curfew and all the doors were locked. She had to rap on Betty's window a long time before Betty woke to let her in. As the eldest, Dorothy helped her mother with the younger children. Brother Harry remembers Dorothy walking him to first grade in Hodges. Harry relates that the teacher was a bit crabby and kind of mean. Harry got in trouble with her right away and was scolded and sent to the cloak room until he could "behave." Crying, Harry didn't sit in the cloak room, but walked home and told his mom and Dorothy about that mean teacher. Well, school was school, so back Harry went with Dorothy. Dorothy saw to it Harry got back into class and then she left. The teacher started in on Harry and now she had a ruler and was whacking it on her hand and Harry just knew he was next. But no...Dorothy had stood in the cloak room listening, and when she heard all this she came back into the classroom to see to things with Harry's teacher. Harry did get through the first grade. Dorothy left Montana to visit an aunt in Florida and ended up attending beauty school. Betty remembers being practiced on many times, with numerous mudpacks coming to mind. And although Dorothy was good with hair, she never used her training to make a living. She eventually ended up in Wisconsin and worked for the Parker Pen Co. On June 29, 1929, Dorothy married Lauren Helvik. They had one child, Delores. Dorothy and Lauren spent some of their married years in eastern Montana where Lauren was on construction crews that built bridges. Good thing that Dorothy loved to travel, as they moved around from bridge site to bridge site. Delores recalls living in camps at some of the sites, because the site would be a ways from town. Dorothy would do the cooking for the workers. Lauren died in 1949, and Dorothy returned to Glendive. Thus, began her second experience of operating a food establishment. With the help of her

brothers Ray and Harry and their families, she built , opened, and operated Glendive's first drive-in, The Runway Drive Inn. On Sept. 22, 1951, Dorothy married a friend from childhood, James Dvorak. "Butch" as Jim called her, and he ran the drive-in. The drive-in had a counter with stools, a few booths and a jukebox. Car hops handled the drive up business. Dorothy didn't want cars honking for the car hops, so she put a sign that read, "Blink your lights for curbside service". One morning after Halloween, Dorothy came to work to find her sign gone. A few days later a gentleman stopped by the drive-in and told Dorothy that he knew where her sign was. He told her it was at the local house of ill-repute, the Twenty Acre Ranch. "Blink your lights for curbside service". Dorothy got her sign back but always regretted not having asked how the gentleman knew where it was. The jukebox at the Runway was generally busy. Dorothy even found time to teach a few young fellows to dance, that being the Copping brothers, Chuck and Dean. Dancing didn't really inspire Chuck, but Dean thought it to be great fun. Dean would show up just before closing and help Dorothy close and clean up and in return receive dance instructions and some practice from Dorothy. Dorothy always shopped at Buttrey's for her groceries. One of the few times Dorothy got really angry was at the grocery store. The store changed it's policy to allow checks to be written for up to \$10 over the purchase price. Dorothy came shopping one day and rolled up to check out. She had written a check before she came and the change due back was over \$10. The clerk told Dorothy that she couldn't take the check because of the new store policy. Dorothy reminded the clerk of all the groceries she had purchased over the years, but the clerk stood firm. Dorothy told her she could just return all the groceries to the shelves and she walked out. Dorothy didn't get mad often but when she did, it stuck. Although Dorothy worked most of her life, she always had a good time. Dorothy found life to be fun. The Runway sponsored a bowling team that Dorothy and Delores were on. Over the years, Dorothy went to several state bowling tournaments and even to one national tourney. No one ever recalls her winning anything, but she sure had a great time. She enjoyed crafts such as

knitting, crocheting, and making button and bead jewelry and ornaments. Dorothy was an active member of the Women of the Moose. She held the offices of Senior Regent and Recorder. If you have looked at the memory board pictures, you have probably noticed the "grass skirt girls. Dorothy would also perform a solo skit along the line of Charlie Chaplin. She would wear a hat, large coat, and a long black mustache. The music included singing and whistling, and when the whistling part would come, she would blow air out the side of her mouth and part of the mustache would fly up. Dorothy liked to play the machines and gamble. She was quite lucky and would win raffles and drawings. Clint, her grandson remembers her winning a bike that she gave to him. He couldn't touch the pedals and had to grow into it. But he did learn to ride that bike. Clint's wife, Yvonne, remembers Dorothy visiting them in Gillette and going to the horse races. Soon everyone was checking with Dorothy before betting on horses, as she was the only one winning. For Dorothy's 89th birthday, Delores and Chuck planned a surprise for Dorothy. They got her all dressed up and drove to Forsyth. They met Dorothy's sister Betty and her husband Bert. When Betty came up and greeted Dorothy, Dorothy just returned the greeting not realizing who it was. Then she did a double take and recognized Betty. The surprise was complete. They all went out for dinner and to the casino to play the machines. Dorothy loved to travel. She and Jim were able to accompany Delores and Chuck to Europe. Many wonderful memories and pictures came out of that trip. Over the course of her life, family was very important to Dorothy and she was very close to her siblings and their families. Dorothy and Jim 's home on River Road was next to her brother Harry and her parents lived just down the road. Family gatherings were frequent, especially in the summer. A common area between Dorothy and Harry's houses was a picnic place with a patio and outdoor stove. One favorite activity was when Dorothy and Harry would set off fireworks that their parents brought back after going south. Dorothy managed to burn her hand on a roman candle and ended up in the emergency room. Young and old alike enjoyed the yards and homes by the river. Grandson Clint was at Dorothy's one day when she was

dog sitting for Harry's boxer. Dorothy loved dogs so taking care of the boxer was a treat. That day the boxer got into a porcupine. Grandpa Jim was bartending at the Elks and that was where Dorothy, Clint and the dog ended up. Doc Thompson and some fellows were playing poker. A pliers was located and Doc and his buddies had a good time holding down the dog and pulling out quills. Dorothy and Clint were quite impressed with Doc's veterinary skills. Clint's younger brother Mike, put a good scare into Grandma Dorothy one day. She found Mike at the top of the TV antenna tower. Mike was quite small and Grandma, as scared as she was, didn't want to scare him. She just nicely told Mike that it was time to come down. Down he came. She had a few words with Mike when he hit ground. That adventure was not repeated. Dorothy and Delores couldn't figure why he had done that but Clint thought maybe he had seen someone else do it. One of Clint's experiences with his Grandmother's sense of adventure was when he gave her a ride on his motorcycle. She got on his helmet and climbed on back. Clint rode down the street slowly and carefully, you know it was Grandma on the back, and he didn't want to scare her. Suddenly, she slapped him on the back and said "Doesn't this go any faster?" There was no slowing down Dorothy. In the mid 70's, Dorothy and Jim sold the house on River road and moved into an apartment on the second floor of Delores and Chuck's house. The stairway to their apartment was narrow and steep. But the great grandkids, Jason and Breanna, loved to come visit and race up those stairs to grandma great and grandpa great's apartment. Of course there were always treats. Jason especially remembers the large caramel covered marshmallows dipped in rice crispies. Breanna remembers the cheese nips. Breanna thought grandma great's bedroom was the best place to play. It was full of family pictures, gadgets, and her personal favorite, a sock monkey. Jason's childhood memory was of walking down the street with grandma great to where a bunch of older people were selling things for a few dollars, and that's where he did his Xmas shopping. Grandma great was fun to be around. And now seems a good time to address Dorothy's

hair. Before she turned completely gray, she sported dark hair with a distinctive white stripe running through it. Breanna thought grandma great had hair like a skunk. When Clint introduced his fiancée Yvonne to Dorothy, Yvonne looking at Dorothy's hair thought, "what a modern woman". But truthfully, all enjoyed Dorothy's sense of style and her hair, especially Dorothy herself. In the course of living 96 years, Dorothy experienced many things. She had worked hard, raised a family, experienced the joy of having family close at hand, was involved in the community, celebrated births, mourned for those who died. Dorothy lost Jim in 1992. She was preceded in death by her brother Ray and his wife, Winona, her sons-in-law, Chuck Copping and Bert White, and her grandson, Mike Copping. In 2002, because of failing health, Dorothy moved to the GMC Extended Care Facility. Even there and in failing health she kept her sweet and easy to get along with ways. Dorothy's independent spirit did raise its head one day. Because of swelling in her legs, it was decided to have her lay down for part of the day. That didn't suit Dorothy. When an aide came in to get her settled in bed after lunch, Dorothy refused to lay down. The aide said those were the orders from the head nurse and the head nurse was the boss. Dorothy's reply "No, I'm the boss." And so she was. And so she lived, independent, in charge and enjoying. On Wednesday February 9, 2005, at the Glendive Medical Center Extended Care Facility, Dorothy Edith Dvorak died. We are saddened by her passing but comforted by the memories of this wonderful woman's life. Let's us hold Dorothy and our memories of her close to our hearts as we listen to one of the songs Dorothy has selected for today. Song: Evening Prayer Celebrant Reading from great-granddaughter Breanna Chavez Celebrant Dorothy's 96 years of living allowed her to touch several generations of her family in a most personal way. I would like to share with you now some thoughts from some of the grandchildren and great grandchildren. Jason used the words "uplifting", super kind and always happy. Being around grandma great made any troubles seem not so big. Breanna found grandma great to be fun and cool and Breanna will always remember grandma great's birthday because Breanna's middle

daughter was born on that day. Granddaughter Joy Whitehead remembers a screened in gazebo to have tea parties in; spraying each other, adults and kids, with water on hot summer days. Joy remembers Dorothy as a sweet, gentle woman who was fun to hug and love. Joy appreciated Dorothy remembering birthdays, and being a loving and dedicated wife to her grandpa Jim. Terry, Joy's sister, was graduating from college in Utah and Jim and Dorothy traveled there to part of that important day. Terry remembers Dorothy saying they wouldn't have missed it for anything. Dorothy and Terry had lunch and shopping together and that has become a special memory for Terry. Grandson Jim Dvorak recalls how kindhearted and loving Dorothy was. When he visited her at the extended care facility, he would bring chocolate kisses and was always rewarded with a big smile. Dorothy's legacy is apparent in all the generations of her family, as they all carry a part of her with them. Let us now listen to Dorothy's second music selection for today's service. Song: Rock of Ages Celebrant: Closing Dorothy Dvorak lived a full and rich life, loving and being loved by many. She will be missed, she will be mourned, she will be remembered. Her daughter, Delores, lost her husband Chuck, two months ago and now she has experienced the loss of her mother, her friend. Please remember Delores in the weeks and months to come. Much of the family lives away, so it is important as friends, as a community, that we provide comfort and support to Delores. A phone call, a shared cup of coffee, a comforting touch. Little things that can mean a lot. Your presence here today is much appreciated. It is an important day when we stop to bear witness to a person's life and times among us, the difference her living and dying has made among family and community, and to take time to express our grief, our hope, our wonder and our memories. Thank you for being here today, for this important moment. This concludes Dorothy Dvorak's life tribute service.

Tribute Wall



“ *Dorothy Dvorak*

December 07, 2022 at 04:10 PM