



## Mary Harstad

October 30, 1908 - March 22, 2010

GLENDIVE, MONTANA: Mary B. Harstad, age 101, passed away on Thursday, March 18, 2010 at the Glendive Medical Center Extended Care in Glendive. A Vigil Service will be held at 7:00 P.M. on Sunday, March 21, 2010 in the Chapel of the Silvernale-Silha Funeral Home in Glendive. A Mass of Christian Burial will be held at 10:00 A.M. on Monday, March 22, 2010 in Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Glendive with Father Joseph Ponessa officiating. Rite of Committal will follow in the Dawson County Cemetery in Glendive. Silvernale-Silha Funeral Home of Glendive has been entrusted with the arrangements. Mary was born on October 30, 1908 in Antler, North Dakota, the eldest child of James P. and Margaret (Henderson) Brennan. The family later included brother, Edward T. "Buddy" Brennan and sister, M. Patricia Brennan Taylor, both deceased. After living in several North Dakota towns and Minneapolis, Minnesota, they settled in Savage, Montana where Mary was a member of the Savage High School's first graduating class. She then entered the University of Montana and received a Bachelor's Degree in English in 1929. As a student, she was involved in many campus organizations and was a charter member of Theta Rho Chapter of Delta Delta Delta Sorority. She was appointed to the first board of trustees of the University's endowment foundation (now UM Foundation) by her friend and former classmate, Carl McFarland. She served in a similar position when the Dawson Community College Foundation was formed. She earned a Master's Degree, also in English, at the University of North Dakota in 1933 and did

post-graduate work at the University of Denver and the University of Arizona. Mary's first teaching position was at Richey High School. There she met fellow teacher Kenneth H. Harstad. They were married in 1935. Mary and Ken worked and lived in Richey where their daughters, Patricia (deceased in 1990) and Margot were born. In 1945, the family moved to Glendive and where daughter Katherine was born. Mary resumed her teaching career at Sacred Heart School and then was an educator-librarian at Washington School until her retirement in the late 1970's. During their retirement years, she and Ken wintered in Arizona, where Ken passed away in 1983. Mary was active in many Glendive organizations, especially Sacred Heart Catholic Church, where she served as a lay reader well into her 90's, the Glendive Branch of the American Association of University Women, which once honored her with a named graduate fellowship, civic and social organizations such as the Glendive Medical Center Auxiliary, Southeastern Montana Association for Retarded Citizens, Delta Kappa Gamma education honorary and others. She volunteered at the Glendive Public Library and was active in the local Democratic Party. Mary had resided in the Extended Care wing of the Glendive Medical Center, where she moved in 2006, after leaving the Heritage on Merrill Avenue, where she was one of the first residents. Survivors include daughter, Margot and her husband Daniel Portal of Dijon, France, and their children and grandchildren; daughter, Kathie and her husband Gary Nygaard of Missoula, Montana, their son and grandchildren, the children and grandchildren of her daughter Pat and her husband, Leon Billings of Bethany Beach, Delaware; numerous nieces and nephews; many friends and former students.. Memorials should be directed to the James P. and Margaret Brennan Scholarship at the University of Montana, PO Box 7195, Missoula, MT 59807; Sacred Heart Catholic Church , or a charity of the donor's choice that memorializes Mary's life interests. Remembrances and condolences may be shared with the family at: [www.silvernale-silhafuneralhome.com](http://www.silvernale-silhafuneralhome.com)

# Tribute Wall



“ *Mary Harstad*

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December 07, 2022 at 04:10 PM