



Mary Nicola

October 16, 2011

TRAVERSE CITY — Mary was called home by God on Sunday Oct. 16, 2011. While being in perfect health for 92 years, the last few months of her life created some obstacles which made her yearn to be with her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and so many friends and family that have gone on before her. Born May 8, 1919, to the late Albert and Ferna (Edson) Smalley, she was preceded in death by her four brothers; two sisters; husband, Art; and beloved daughter-in-law, Roxie. Surviving are her children, Gary (Karen), Dan, Bev (Fred) Hastings, Doug (Cyndie); 12 grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren. On Oct. 3, 1942, Mary was united in marriage to Anton "Art" Nicola, who passed away in 2006. They resided in Detroit and Torch Lake Village prior to moving to Traverse City in 1958. She was a faithful member of Faith Reformed Church for 53 years, serving in various capacities including Bundles of Love, Caring Callers, and assembling bulletins. Mary exhibited the spiritual gifts of service and hospitality, ministering to many over the years by opening her home to visitors of the area, some of which were friends of friends and unknown to Mary. She also hosted many special meals where anyone was welcome. A graduate and Valedictorian of Ellsworth High School, she received her teaching certification from County Normal in Mancelona, and later her bachelor's degree from Michigan State University. At age 19, she started teaching in a one-room school house in Bellaire. She walked there each morning, started the wood stove, taught, and then cleaned before walking home at night. She was a beloved Kindergarten teacher at Norris school for 19 years, retiring in 1980, and received many requests from parents to "stay one more year." She would pray over school meals with "her kids" and, when asked what would happen if she was required to stop, she simply replied that "It would be her last year teaching." She thoroughly enjoyed random encounters with former students over the years, as many visited, called and recognized her around town. Upon retiring, she spent many years as a Learning Partner, tutoring under the Volunteers in Prevention program. In recent years she spent much time knitting caps for new babies at Munson Medical Center. She enjoyed traveling in her motorhome; convertibles; snowmobiling; going to the beach; the changing seasons; her view of the bay; picking fresh fruit; and especially spending time with her family. Do not think that Mary has gone from the land of the living to the land of the dying, for she has gone from the land of the dying to the land of

the living. The family would prefer Memorials be given to Faith Reformed Church youth programs. Visitation will be held Thursday, Oct. 20, from 5 to 7 p.m. at Reynolds-Jonkhoff Funeral Home. The funeral will take place at noon Friday, Oct. 21, at Faith Reformed Church. The family is being served by Reynolds-Jonkhoff Funeral Home.