

April 12, 2011

The Life of Mary Swisher

- Services for Mary (Clark) Swisher, 87, of Groton will be Wednesday, April 13 at the United Methodist Church, Groton. The Rev. Matt Richards will officiate. Inurnment will be held at a later date in Huffton Cemetery, Huffton.
- Visitation will be held at the church from 4-7 p.m. on Tuesday with a prayer service at 7 p.m.
- Mary died Sunday, April 10, 2011 at Golden Living Center, Groton.
- Mary Jean Clark was born on December 6, 1923 to John L. and Joy (Miller) Clark in Aberdeen, South Dakota. She grew up in the Putney area, attending grade school at the Haire School in Northeastern Brown County. Following grade



school, she attended Groton High School, graduating in 1941. She attended the University of South Dakota (USD) from 1941 to 1945. While at USD, she was a member of the Pi Beta Phi sorority.

- On March 10, 1944, she was united in marriage to Jay C. Swisher at her farm home near Putney. Their first home was in Camp Polk, Louisiana. Following Jay's return from WWII, they lived for a short time in Okmulgee, Oklahoma and Colorado Springs, Colorado. They then returned to the farm at Putney in 1946, where they raised their five children and ran the family farm.

- Mary was a devoted member of the United Methodist Church in Groton, where she held various offices with the United Methodist Women (UMW), taught Sunday school and was a Methodist Youth Fellowship (MYF) leader. For her service to the church, Mary was honored with the State Methodist "Jewel of a Woman" Award. She was a member of P.E.O., belonged to the Brown County Extension Club, and was a 4-H leader and a volunteer for the cancer drive. Mary was proudly a life long member of the Putney Ladies Aid. In addition, she served on the Brown County Museum Board and on the Brown County Historical Society Board.

- In 1988, Jay was appointed Secretary of Agriculture for South Dakota and served for 6 ½ years. During their time in Pierre, Mary belonged to the Capitol Wives Club, East Pierre Federated Women's Club, Elizabeth Circle of the Methodist Church, and was a volunteer at the Cultural Heritage Center.

- Mary's life was marked by her faith in God, deep love of her family, service to her community and love of the family farm. She took great pride in her family and al

ways attended their activities. Mary loved a rousing game of bridge, she savored all desserts and she was always up for a new adventure. Her sharp sense of humor, laughing blue eyes and beautiful smile will be missed by her family and friends alike.

- Grateful for having shared in her life are her five children: Linda (Art) Gengerke of Groton; Jean (Jim) Kramer of Aberdeen; Lanny (Dnyee) Swisher of Spearfish; Bob (Renee) Swisher of Groton; and Bill (Barb) Swisher of Fort Pierre; one sister, Joy "Abie" Butz, of Green Bay, WI; 14 grandchildren: Chris (John) Wheeting, Ann (Steve) Gibbs, Collin (Deb) Gengerke, Trent Kramer, Heather (Ryan) Gab, Sarah (Shane) Hazledine, Matt (Danielle) Swisher, Lindsey (Tom) Tietz, Erica (Aaron) Roberts, Travis Swisher, Jennifer Swisher, Tim (Barb) Swisher, Mike Swisher, and Carrie (Jerry) Mestas; 24 great-grandchildren: Meagan (Dylan) Stearns, Lauren and Carly Wheeting, Abby, Ashley and Clark Gibbs, Patrick, Trey and Brooke Gengerke, Zoey Gab, Baylee and Preston Hazledine, Riley and Lilianna Swisher, Lane Yoder and McKenna Tietz, Alex Prissel and Savannah Swisher, Collin, Rachael and Julia Swisher, Mia, Alaina and Natalia Mestas; two great-great-grandchildren: Stetson and Sutton Stearns, and many nieces and nephews.

- Preceding her in death are her husband of 64 years, Jay Swisher, her parents, and one brother, John M. Clark.

- Casket bearers will be Collin Gengerke, Trent Kramer, Tim Swisher, Mike Swisher, Matt Swisher, Travis Swisher, and Alex Prissel.