

Crystal Culberson

March 21, 1917 - December 2, 2013



Crystal's Life Story



Crystal V. Culberson was a self-made woman and a devoted wife and mother. Energetic and resilient, she overcame obstacles and created a life of joy and compassion. Generous and accepting, she never met a stranger who didn't soon become a friend. Crystal's loving heart and optimistic spirit will long encourage her family.

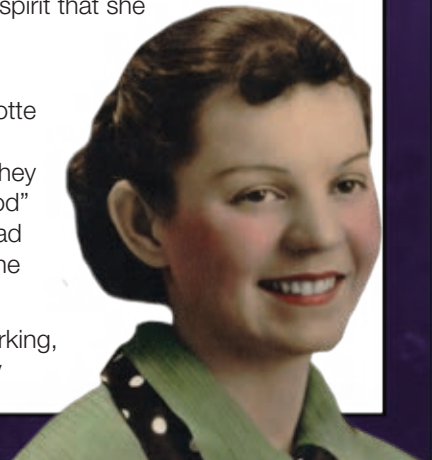
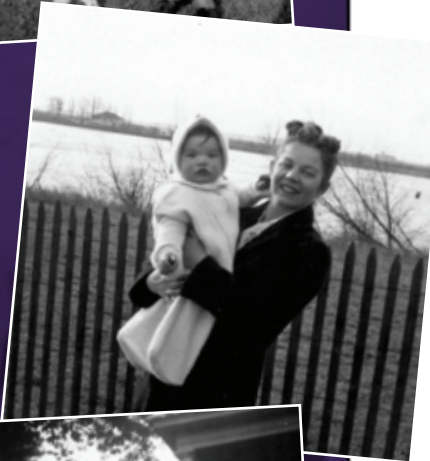
Crystal was born in Saginaw, Michigan to George H. and Charlotte A. (Whalen) McKay on March 21, 1917. That year, the United States was drawn into the first World War that was

meant to "end all wars". The automobile industry that put Michigan on the map was increasing production with Henry Ford's moving assembly line, and workers were uniting to gain fair labor practices. In years to come, Charlotte and Crystal would take their place in that union history.

Growing up, Crystal lived with her family on the Middle Ground of Crow Island until her mother purchased an old tobacco store located near the East River Dock. Charlotte planned to turn the store into a home, however it was her responsibility to have the building moved to a property on the south end of town. Undaunted, Charlotte secured a team of horses and moved the store to its final location on Polk Street. It was a sight that Crystal never forgot and a spirit that she seemed to inherit.

The bond between mother and daughter was strong, and Charlotte and Crystal stood side-by-side through many early struggles. They worked together at "The Plywood" and later at Autolite, and they had the distinction of being part of the first union strike in Bay City.

Being enterprising and hard-working, Crystal had graduated from Bay





City Central High School in 1932 and then completed Beauty College before opening Crystal's Beauty Shop in Essexville. She also took on a housekeeper job that had its lighter moments (after the fact), like the time she watched helplessly as an elaborate dessert slid off of her serving plate and onto the floor.

While in high school, Crystal had met her future husband but didn't know it at the time. She and Edward Culberson became reacquainted a number of years later and began dating. Before their first date, Crystal's mother told Ed that Crystal never cleaned her plate. It was true, she never did, but that obviously didn't keep the two from falling in love and getting married on November 4, 1946 in Saginaw. And it surely never strained their 50 years together.

Crystal and Ed made a life for themselves that included travel and recreation. Over the years, their little travel trailers took them wherever they wanted to go, and only later did they settle down in a cabin they built on Sand Lake. Still, work and driving meant freedom and mobility. Crystal retired at age 73 and drove until she was 95.



Family life was very important to Crystal, and she and Ed had a total of 7 children. She never accepted the term "step" when it came to her children. Rather Crystal continually said, "I love them all so much," and in return she was dearly loved. Being surrounded by family was top on her list of THE GREATEST TIMES OF LIFE. Especially at large family gatherings, Crystal never got enough of listening to all the laughter, and her family became used to hearing such quotable quotes as, "It doesn't make a hill of beans;" or "The road to hell is paved with good intentions;" or "With friends like that who needs enemies."

Activities that brought joy to Crystal's heart included sewing and knitting, especially when she gave them away. She sewed life-sized dolls and clothing as well as Raggedy Ann dolls, and she knitted booties for the first baby of the year born at Bay Regional in 2013. Being an animal lover, she fed birds and stray cats. For her own entertainment, Crystal read



books and played Bingo. Taking nickels to the bank was one of life's little pleasures.

In her long life, Crystal never really slowed down. It was plain to see why she didn't take naps: "There are so many things to do."

Crystal V. Culberson, age 96 of Essexville, Michigan, died Monday December 2, 2013 at Bay Medical Care Facility. She is survived by her 7 children; Judy (Jack) Hegenauer of Solana Beach, CA, Barbara (John) Walker of New Port Richey, FL, Larry Culberson of Glennie, MI, Karen Nearing of Bay City, Dan (Ellie) Sartain of Bay City, Sally (Rick) Witucki Sutherland of Bay City and Crystal (Dohn) Smythe of Tecumseh, MI. Also surviving are 15 grandchildren, 22 great grandchildren, sister in law Arlene Culberson of Bay City, also numerous nieces, nephews and special friends. She was preceded in death by her husband Edward Culberson in 1999, 2 granddaughters; Sara Nearing and Lori Hegenauer, 3 brothers; Claude McKay, Forrest



Sheldon and Howard McKay. A Life Celebration Service will be held on Mrs. Culberson's birthday, Friday, March 21, 2014 at 3:30 PM at the Hyatt Ewald Funeral Home. The family will receive friends at the funeral home on Friday from Noon until service time at 3:30 PM. Burial will follow in Elm Lawn Cemetery. Those considering an expression of sympathy are asked to consider memorial contributions to: Humane Society of Bay County, American Heart Association or Essexville Baptist Community Church, where Crystal was a member. To sign online guestbook visit www.hyattewald.com.

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