



## Leda Lydia Miller

January 15, 1920 - May 29, 2013

Our mother, Leda Lydia Miller, age 93, of Rapid City, Michigan, formerly of Rantoul, IL, Chanute Air Force Base was blessed to be called into our Lord's arms and into Jack's arms on Wednesday, May 29, 2013. The following was read at the ceremony for Mother of the Year 2008 at the Kalkaska United Methodist Church ..... Let us tell you a little bit about our mother. She grew up in Alden with 10 other brothers and sisters. She was petite with blond hair and beautiful blue eyes. From what I have heard she was also very shy. She met our dad, who is from Elk Rapids, and thought he was the cutest boy she had ever seen. She also knew he would be the one that she would marry. They married in Reno during WWII and moved to San Francisco, where they lived for 4 months until our dad was shipped to the Philippines. A lot of you know the story from there. The Bataan Death March and 4 long years of waiting for our dad while he was MIA and a Japanese prisoner of war. Our mother never wavered in her love for him, even though, she would often look at her wedding ring and wonder if she was really married. Our dad finally arrived home and they started a life raising their family. Our mother was a military wife and loved it. Jean arrived first and 3 years later she found out that she was pregnant with Judy. Off to England they went. Judy was delivered by a mid-wife in an English hospital. Back in the 50's things were very different in England than they were in the U.S. It was a real experience having an infant in England being so far away from her family and friends, but yet she speaks of those years fondly. We never heard her complain about how hard those

years were or how lonely she must have been. We can go on and on about our mom. How she loved military life. She never complained about moving. She would just say "you have to go where the work is". She was a stay at home mom as most were back in those days. So when we would come home from school, even through high school, we would have the best talks. She gave great advice. "Pretty is as pretty does." "Never say anything bad about anyone." "You can always find some good in everyone." "Never kiss a boy on the first date." "Follow your head and not your heart." Our mother never got angry . . . never. Never said a mean word to anyone or about anyone . . . no exaggeration!!! Her whole life was her family and still is. Whenever we have a problem, to this day, she is there for us. And even though now we help her more that she helps us, the desire to help us has never left. Our mother has watched brothers and sisters die. She has accepted her blindness better than we would ever be able to do. She cannot do many things she would like to, but her attitude is unbelievable. She still does the laundry, tries to clean the house, etc. etc. etc. She gets up every day with severe back pain and never stops. Depressed and lonely are not even in her vocabulary. Our mother is our idol. If we could be even half the person our mother is we would be very happy. She is our best friend and always has been. With or without this award, she will always be Mother of the Year to us. We love you mom, Judy and Gary. Leda was the daughter of the late Merle and Carrie (Sattler) Barber. She cherished being a member of such a warm and loving family. Leda was born on January 15, 1920 in Rapid City and delivered by Dr. Miller who just 5 hours earlier had delivered Jack Miller in Elk Rapids, who 21 years later would become her husband. Leda grew up on a farm in Alden overlooking Torch Lake. After high school, she attended a girl's camp in Charlevoix where she learned basic homemaking skills. Leda married Jack on July 4, 1941 in Reno, Nevada. They were married only 4 short months and living in San Francisco when Jack was shipped out as a member of the United States Army Air Corp to serve in the Philippines. He was taken captive by the Japanese and held as a P.O.W. for 4 years after surviving the Bataan Death March. During the war,

Leda lived in Traverse City and worked at Burwoods. After 4 long years, Jack returned home and continued to serve his country as a member of the United States Air Force for the next 20 years. Leda and Jack lived and traveled all over, including England where one of their 3 children were born. Leda and Jack loved pinochle and square dancing and they were members of the Circle R Square Dance Club in Rantoul, IL. They also loved road trips and camping with the family. By the time her children were 18 years old, the family had camped and traveled throughout most of the United States. They always camped in a very small trailer and slept in the station wagon. A book, *Lifelines*, was written by Jack's nephew, Terry Wooten, about Leda and Jack's dedication to each other during World War II while distance and circumstance kept them apart. *Lifelines* was performed as a stage play by several high schools, including Jack's alma mater, Elk Rapids High School. It was also performed by the Old Town Playhouse in Traverse City. Leda is so missed by her children, Jean (Van) Fossler of Atlanta GA, Judy (Pastor Howard) Seaver of Rapid City, and Gary (Marilyn) Miller of Cary, IL; her grandchildren, Amber Steo, Kelly Leusch, Craig Seaver, Chad Seaver, Nathan Miller, Emily Erbach, Margaret Miller, and Andrew Miller; 7 precious great-grandchildren; her dearly loved siblings, Leo (Ella Mae) Barber of Rapid City and Erma Deater of Rapid City; and her sister-in-law and brother-in-law, Lillian (Bruce) McLachen of Kewadin and Dick Miller of Elk Rapids; and her many nieces and nephews. Leda was preceded in death by her much loved parents; 10 brothers and sisters; and the love of her life, Jack, who passed away in March of last year after 71 years of marriage. We thank God that our parents are finally reunited after more than 1 year of being apart. We give you to God, Mom, and we know you will be His star angel. Visitation for Leda will take place Saturday, June 1, 2013 from 6-8 p.m. at Wolfe-O'Neill Funeral Home. Funeral services will be held on Sunday at 2:00 p.m. at the Alden United Methodist Church with Pastor Howard Seaver officiating. Burial will take place in Clearwater Township Cemetery. Memorials may be given to the Munson Hospice, 1105

6th St., Traverse City, MI 49686. Condolences may be left online at [www.wolfeoneill.com](http://www.wolfeoneill.com). Arrangements were made by Wolfe-O'Neill Funeral Home, our family serving yours.

# Tribute Wall



“ Just now decided to try to find you guys through your Mom's obit. Sorry for the losses of your parents. Mine are gone now, also. Wondering if you remember us from Rantoul - Paul, Bonnie, Wes & Marla Wright (O'Ferrall). Jean used to babysit for us. We must have known you guys through church and square dancing - my dad was a teacher & caller. I remember your Mom & Dad visiting us I think here in Mascoutah, IL, where I live once again. Marla (Wright) O'Ferrall

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**Marla** - February 11, 2023 at 10:13 AM



“ *Leda Lydia Miller*

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January 30, 2023 at 04:02 AM



“ *Leda Lydia Miller*

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January 30, 2023 at 01:03 AM