

## GETTING TO KNOW OUR PARISH FAMILY

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### Stella "Dixie" Niebur

You may not know her as "Stella" but most people in the area DO know her as "Dixie"; a name given to her by her father when she was a baby. Dixie was born to John and Abbie Nicolai just outside of Hampton and has lived in the Hampton area her entire life. She attended school at St. Mathias for eight years and remembers her dad bringing her to school in a horse drawn sleigh in the winter. She graduated from Farmington High School and worked in Farmington, after graduation, before marrying Flory Niebur.

Flory was the son of John and Anna Niebur, whose family also attended St. Mathias. He joined the Army and was stationed in France during WW II. In 1947 Dixie and Flory were married at St. Mathias and became part of the local farming community. They lived on a 365 acre dairy farm that was their pride and joy. Their children were always involved in 4-H and showed dairy cattle at the county and state fair. Flory died of cancer in 1982, while sitting in his lawn chair, looking at his cows.

The Nieburs had ten children: Linda (Dan) Stadler, Northfield, Larry (Ellen), Clear Lake, IA, Michael (Sarah), Cannon Falls, Charlie (Teresa), Randolph, Nick (Mary), Hampton, John (Karen), Normal, IL, Jeannie (Duane) Ness, Northfield, Ann (Mark) May, Randolph, Betti (Scott) Walter, Janesville and Glen (Marcia), South Bend, IN. Dixie has 32 grandchildren and 44 great-grandchildren. Her favorite holiday is Christmas, and she still hosts the family gathering at her home. Her family enjoys spending time together during the holidays and the numbers are up to 120 people!

After Flory's death, Dixie sold the family farm to her son Charlie, and built a house in Hampton. She started volunteering at St. Mathias School and Randolph Elementary School, helping in the classroom with math and reading. The students enjoyed working with her and many still refer to her as "Grandma Dixie". She also did the altar linens and taught religion for several years. For the past 25 years she has been volunteering at a non-profit, free store in St. Paul, where she continues to work one day a week. Dixie's favorite pastimes were coaching softball, golfing, playing cards, bus trips and going out to lunch with her friends.

In recent years she organized a weekly Euchre card game in New Trier during the winter months for many retirees from the area. She has been a member of St. Anne's, Mother of Perpetual Help Circle, the church choir and the Hampton Area Boosters.

One of her favorite memories was having her brother, Ray, ask her to join him on the pitcher's mound to throw out the first pitch at the Twins game on his 90th birthday. She has always been an avid Twins fan.

Because of her large family, Dixie has probably attended more football, basketball, softball, baseball and hockey games than you can imagine; and watched countless choir, band, theater performances and gymnastics than you can count. She also enjoyed attending the county fair when a family member showed cattle or pigs or participated in a 4-H or FFA project. She has supported the FFA organization for years and recently received an award from the Randolph FFA for her continued support. Dixie has been an important part of the Hampton community and St. Mathias Parish.