



## Lidija Ieleja

May 10, 2009

Ieleja, Lidija age 96, of Mpls, died peacefully on May 1 at Edina Care Center with her family and pastor present. Born in Daugavpils, Latvia, March 23, 1913, daughter of Radion & Proskovia Smolakov. She made her way to America as a war refugee with her family and resided in Mpls for 58 years. Lidija married Karlis Ieleja, a career NCO in the Latvian Army in 1931 and had three children. Their middle child, Imants, died in infancy. In 1944, they fled the Soviet Invasion of Latvia with children, Leonids and Benita. After spending five years in Displaced Persons camps in Germany, the family immigrated to Brookings, SD under sponsorship of the Flittie family. They moved to Mpls in 1951 and became naturalized citizens in 1956. Lidija worked at the Rosenblatt Clothing Factory until retirement. She was a skilled seamstress and homemaker and loved to cook the "Old World Way," especially for feasts and gatherings. Lidija's love of gardening, passion for beautiful things, and her knack for catching more Northerns than her husband on their many vacations to northern Minnesota will be remembered. Sadly, Lidija saw the deaths of her first born, Leonids in 1985, her beloved Karlis in 1985 and Benita in 2007. Her strength which allowed her to carry on with love and dignity through so much loss and hardship is an inspiration to all who knew her. Lidija is survived by daughter-in-law, Zane Ieleja and son-in-law, Girts Jatnieks; grandchildren, Linda (Gary) Gerstman, Liga (Martins) Krikis, Aldis (Mara) Jatnieks, Zaiga (Sergio Lazcano) Jatnieks; great-grandchildren, Sophie, Leo, Raitis, Jurgis, Vaira, Janis, Kalvis, Vilnis, Rudis and Kristine. Funeral service 10 AM

Tuesday, May 12 at the Latvian Lutheran Church, 3152 17th Ave S., Mpls.  
Visitation one hour prior to service at church. Interment Crystal Lake  
Cemetery. Washburn-McReavy Crystal Lake Chapel 612-521-3677