

Frieda Vainio Waterson, age 99, passed away on January 25, 2025, at Weston County Manor, Newcastle, Wyoming, where she had been a resident for several years.

Frieda was born January 4, 1926, in Lead, South Dakota, to Werner and Lydia (Anderson) Vainio. Her father was a Finnish immigrant, and her mother was also Finnish and was a first-generation American. The family lived in Lead where her father worked in the gold mine. Later they moved to Newell, South Dakota, to be closer to family and then to the Whitewood Valley area where Frieda attended country school and learned to speak English. The family farmed and Frieda helped with chores and milking cows from an early age. She spent her first year of high school in Lead, South Dakota, where she lived with the Matson family helping with their children. Returning home, she finished high school in Whitewood and graduated in 1944. Her first months after school were spent in Detroit, MI, living with her aunt and working at the Detroit Press as a typist. She then moved back home and married her high school sweetheart William Waterson Jr. on March 25, 1945. The couple was blessed with 4 children and lived in many places around the hills including Rapid City, Lead, Sturgis, and St. Onge. In 1969, Will was seriously injured in a construction accident and was unable to work for several years. During that time, Frieda worked to support the family. To secure their future and attain her life-long dream, she decided to go to college and become a teacher. Frieda graduated from Black Hills State in 1972, and the family moved to Newcastle, Wyoming, where she taught special education and kindergarten for over 20 years. Upon retirement, Frieda and Will moved back to Spearfish where they lived until Will's death in 2011. Frieda then moved to Newcastle to be closer to her daughter and later became a resident of Weston County Manor.

Frieda was a devoted daughter, wife, mother, and grandmother and loved the Lord with all her heart. She was a talented seamstress making most of her two daughters' clothes as well as her own and sewing for others when needed. She loved gardening, growing flowers, crocheting, and baking, especially chocolate chip cookies for the grandkids and farmer bread for everyone. But most of all, she loved spending time with family and friends. She was always ready with coffee and welcomed all guests whether it was just a chat, giving a friend a perm, or feeding breakfast to a kitchen full of deer hunters. Frieda and Will loved to go dancing, to travel, and later in their life, they enjoyed a good slot tournament and a chance to visit with new-found friends. She loved being a teacher and by chance in her later years, she lived in an apartment at Weston County Senior Center that had once been her kindergarten room. It was very special for her and gave her a chance to talk about her great memories and experiences as a teacher and all the children she had taught.

Frieda is survived by her son, James (Becky) Waterson of Ogden, Utah; daughter, Vera (Richard) Huber of Newcastle, Wyoming; son-in-law, Dwight Vander Vorste of Royal City, Washington; brother, Paul Vainio of Albuquerque, New Mexico; 12 grandchildren, 24 great grandchildren, and 4 great-great grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her husband, William Waterson Jr.; her son, David and daughter-in-law, Tara Waterson of Fort Peck, Montana; her daughter, Shirley Vander Vorste of Royal City, Washington; her brother, John and sister-in-law, Laurie of St. Onge, South Dakota; her sister, Vera and brother-in-law, Kenny Boe of Rapid, South Dakota, and infant grandson, Timothy Waterson.

In lieu of flowers the family requests donations be made to the Weston County Manor Activities Department in Frieda's honor.

Condolences may be sent to the family at [www.kinkadefunerals.com](http://www.kinkadefunerals.com).

*The family invites you to join them for fellowship and refreshments  
at the church, following the burial.  
Thank you for your presence and condolences.*



*In Loving Memory Of*  
***Frieda Irene Waterson***

*Born*

January 4, 1926  
Lead, South Dakota

*Died*

January 25, 2025  
Newcastle, Wyoming

*Memorial Service*

Saturday, February 15, 2025, 1:00 p.m.  
Immanuel Lutheran Church  
Whitewood, South Dakota

*Officiant*

Reverend David Baer

*Musician*

Soloist: Justin Waterson  
“Tears to Come”

*Musical Selections*

“How Great Thou Art” “Just as I Am”

*Honorary Pallbearers*

All her Grandchildren and  
Great Grandchildren

*Final Resting Place*

Whitewood Cemetery  
Whitewood, South Dakota

Don't think of her as gone away-  
her journey's just begun,  
life holds so many facets-  
this earth is only one. . .

Just think of her as resting  
from the sorrows and the tears  
in a place of warmth and comfort  
where there are no days and years.

Think how she must be wishing  
that we could know today  
how nothing but our sadness  
can really pass away.

And think of her as living  
in the hearts of those she touched. . .  
for nothing loved is ever lost-  
and she was loved so much.