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Press Release

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Laurel Leader's Legend, Gertrude Poe, Passes Away at 101 Years of Age



If you ever wanted a female role model to look up to, you didn't have far to look in Laurel. Gertrude Poe, former Editor of the Laurel Leader, was the epitome of a Renaissance woman and it is with deep sadness, Mayor Craig A. Moe announces the passing of Ms. Poe on July 13, 2017. She was 101 years old.

Ms. Poe was a stalwart supporter of the City of Laurel. She graduated from the old Laurel High School in 1931. After graduation, Ms. Poe went to work as a secretary for local attorney, George McCeney, and after working in his law offices for 5 years, Ms. Poe went to Washington College of Law, where she graduated with a Juris Doctor degree in 1939.

Ms. Poe returned to Mr. McCeney's law firm, expecting to work as a lawyer, but Mr. G. Bowie McCeney had a different idea, which was fortunate for Laurel and the Leader! Ms. Poe recounts that he handed her a copy of the Laurel Leader and told her his career had ended as editor and hers was just beginning.

Though Ms. Poe fought this decision, she came to it naturally, became a co-publisher and business partner of Mr. McCeney and for the first 20 years, she filled in numerous roles to make certain the Laurel Leader got out on time every week. She retired from the paper in 1980, but not before receiving numerous prestigious awards and recognitions such as the first woman president of the Maryland Press Association in 1958 to receiving the Patriotic Civilian Service Award in 1963 and after her retirement, she was inducted into the Maryland Women's Hall of Fame in 1987, just to name a few of her prestigious honors.

Known as "Maryland's First Lady of Journalism," Ms. Poe started her adventure-filled life in Granite, Maryland in Baltimore County. From there, her family moved to Laurel, where she spent most of her life and after her retirement, she moved to Ashton, where she passed away yesterday.

For 41 years, Ms. Poe was the sails, rudder and wheel of the boat known as the Laurel Leader and her guidance, humor and knowledge will be greatly missed.

Mayor Moe said it is a very sad day for the City of Laurel to lose a Laurel citizen with such talent, insight, and love for the City. Gertrude Poe will be missed by many for a long time to come. She was truly an inspiration to all she met and was a very caring citizen of this great City. Thank you to the Laurel Leader, and photographer Jen Rynda, for providing the attached picture to this press release.



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