



2022 Lindsay Orange Blossom Festival  
Honored Person  
Ms. Ellen DiChiera Blumer

Ellen DiChiera Blumer was born on August 23, 1928 in Glass Port, Pennsylvania to parents Cosimo and Maria DiChiera, who immigrated to the U.S. in 1920 from a small village called Caulonia, in the region of Calabria in southern Italy. She was the third of four children and one of two daughters. In 1945, the family left the cold of Pittsburgh region and moved to sunny Los Angeles. Ellen left high school that year in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade to become a switchboard operator for Pacific Bell Telephone where she would work for the next 37 years. She married the late Don Hendricks in 1949 and in 1958, Ellen and Don relocated to Lindsay where she has lived the majority of her life.

After moving to Lindsay, Ellen transferred to the Porterville branch of Pacific Bell and Don purchased a service station on the corner where the Lindsay Library now stands. Her education resumed at the Porterville Adult School where she graduated in 1962 and then she attended Porterville College. Ellen retired from Pacific Bell in 1982 from her position as a Service Rep. Not wanting to be idle, she began a new job the following Monday with the Lindsay Unified School District as a classroom aid for Maria Knutson. She then became a parent coordinator for two years, after which she transferred to Steve Garvey Jr. High and became a classroom tutor retiring in 1994.

Ellen found a new love in Eldon Blumer. They were married in 1996 and celebrated 21 years of marriage before Eldon's death in 2017. Ellen and Eldon loved to travel, taking many road trips across the country. One very memorable trip they took was to Italy in 2015 with her brother and extended family to visit her parents' village.

At 93, Ellen is the last remaining of her family. Ellen's brother, Albert DiChiera build and owned a popular miniature golf course in Lemon Cove. Her brother, Dr. David DiChiera founded Michigan Opera Theatre and the Detroit Opera House.

Ellen's older sister, Violet Bonett had been an award-winning teacher at Jefferson Elementary School when cancer took her life in 1975. With students and volunteers, Violet had designed and begun making a glass mosaic mural that hung on the façade of the school for many years. After her death, Ellen helped organize volunteers to complete the mural and with her brother, David commissioned a plaque in Violet's honor. Today, the mural resides in the front lobby of the school.

Ellen has dedicated her life to volunteer service. In 1988 she was awarded "Woman of the Year" by the Lindsay Chamber of Commerce. In the March 16, 1987 Lindsay Gazette, a Chamber representative stated, "Just being in nearly every committee in and around town does not make you woman of the year...but being active in the community and giving unselfishly of your time does. Ellen Hendricks is one of the few people who gives and gives and gives." She became the first female member of Lindsay's Kiwanis Club in 1990 serving as President from 1994-1995. In 2004, she was appointed to the position of Lieutenant Governor Elect and in 2005 became Lieutenant Governor serving a one-year term. Ellen served as a council woman of the City of Lindsay from 1986-1996. She was one of the founders of the Lindsay Community Theater and served in many volunteer roles, including office manager, usher and fundraiser. She also has held positions on the Lindsay Community Theater Board, the Lindsay Recreation Commission, the Lindsay Hospital Guild, the Executive Committee of the Orange Blossom Festival, the Lindsay Red Ribbon Committee and at one time the Mayor's community task force

on drug and alcohol abuse. She was also involved in the Lindsay School District's Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention Team. She is a life member of the Church of Jesus Christ and was for many years active in its' Missionary Benevolent Association dedicated to providing adequate housing for senior members of the church. She is a dedicated member of the Sons of Italy and sponsor of Hoina, a nonprofit orphanage in India founded by a childhood friend.

Ellen recognizes that at the age of 93, now she is one of the most senior members of her church and the entire town of Lindsay. She feels blessed to have three stepsons (with 8 grandchildren and 8 great grandchildren), three nieces, three nephews and many grand nieces and nephews.

Ellen's life philosophy is "Always keep a smile."

Ellen proudly says Lindsay has given her many blessings, a lifetime of friends, and a safe environment in which to live.

### "Beauty to Behold"

Written By Ellen DiChiera Blumer  
(Published in Poetry.com, 2001)

As I rise and see the sun  
I see beauty in God's world  
I want to rush, run, and not miss anything  
Explore the endless scene of God's true love  
To hold a flower in my hand  
And smell its fragrance,  
Fresh and sweet like our life,  
So short, humble, and meek.  
One must stop and really think  
If not for God, the stars  
Would not shine or wink  
The moon would not give us light  
Throughout the night  
Our eyes that see the beauty  
Of this World  
Given freely for us to behold

### AWARDS:

American Association of University Women Service Award, 1996  
Lindsay City Council appreciation and recognition, 1986-1996  
Lindsay Chamber of Commerce Woman of the Year, 1987  
Kiwanis of Lindsay Distinguished Service Award, 1990  
Lindsay City Mayor's Special Service Award, 1996  
Lindsay Public Safety Service Award, 1986-1996  
Lindsay Jaycees Distinguished Award, 1987  
Telephone Pioneers of America Award (also served as President)  
Charter Member of the City of Hope, Porterville  
Plus, numerous certificates of appreciation from local schools.