



Jeanette LaRae Smith was born the second daughter of Thelma (Shipley) and Hazen Smith on June 29, 1937 in Taylor Nebraska, at home with Grandma Shipley as the midwife. She attended Taylor School and graduated with the class of 1955. At that time without further education, you could teach the elementary level, so she taught one year at the Sioux Creek school. On November 5, 1956, she married her high school sweetheart, Richard Lewis. The “town girl” returned from her honeymoon to become a rancher’s wife for the next 59 years, when she lost the love of her life, and continued residing on the ranch 66 years, until the last 2 months of her life. She loved the ranch life, mowing and raking hay—taking great pride in making those windrows straight and not take out a fence with the 24 foot hydraulic rake. She raked with the jeep when the kids were little so they could be with her. She enjoyed going to the bull sales with Richard and never

missed the annual calf sale in the fall. She never balked at having baby calves in the kitchen during calving time, but she never learned to milk, cause then she wouldn’t have to do it. Loved to cook and bake. While the kids were still at home, she made bread and cinnamon rolls every Saturday. Loved her flowers and gardening and crafts.

She did a lot of crocheting, including afghan’s (of which she sent home with exchange students). She was an avid Husker fan and sports lover. She was a faithful fan of the Wildcats and Wolves, even after she didn’t have family playing. Not everyone got to sit in the garbage can spot with a seat up close and personal. She never saw a kid she couldn’t love, especially her grandkids, along with exchange students, foster children and neighbors kids—she loved them all.

Jeanette accepted Christ as her personal savior at the age of 7 at her grandmother’s knee. She was a member of the Taylor Assembly of God church and served as the Sunday School treasurer for 35 years, and as Women’s Ministry leader. She was along side Richard as they were youth leaders for many years. She was a 4-H leader for over 20 years, and was a member of the Pleasant View Club. She was a member of the Gideon International Auxiliary.

Reading was a favorite pastime, and she would make trips to the library for books and fellowship. She was voracious reader and proud of literary accomplishments of her family. Growing up in the newspaper business, she never outgrew the habit of proof reading, correcting grammar, misspelled words and incorrect word usage.

Music was an important part of her life. She loved to sing and was a soloist at many funerals and weddings in the community. She could no longer sing solos after having so many tubes in her throat damaged her vocal cords. She was an avid supporter of her children in their musical accomplishments.

Living the last 12 years without her legs, she was an inspiration to many—never complaining but always encouraging others.

She is survived by daughter, Kathy (Kerry) Fowler, son, Kent (Linda) Lewis of Burwell, Grandchildren Abigail and Jacki Lewis, Niki (Vince) Bunker, Don Risley. Great Grandchildren include Kyle, Teyona,

Alisa, Caden, and Conner; One brother Dan Smith, and sisters-in-law-Shirley Birch, Claris Lewis, Cleo Keith, Susan Smith, brother- in-law Jim Sprague, and many nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Hazen and Thelma, sister Elaine Harris, brother, Leland Smith, sister Carole Sprague, and brother Dave Smith.

A memorial service will be held at 11:00 a.m. Tuesday, November 29, 2022 at the Burwell Baptist Church. Burial will be in Kent Cemetery. Pastor Richard Schoonover and Pastor Mike Carl will officiate. Visitation will be Monday from 5 – 7 p.m. at Hitchcock Funeral Home in Burwell. Memorials are suggested to Gideons International or the Loup County Ag Society Keyboard Fund.