

Hiawatha, KS



Helen M. Knabe, 79, of Hiawatha, died Friday night, February 21, 2020, at Maple Heights Nursing & Rehabilitation Center after a brief illness. She had been a resident of Vintage Park for many years.

Helen was born on July 30, 1940 in Kilgore, Texas, one of nine children born to Sidney S. Long, Sr. and Effie Loden Long. She grew up and attended schools in Kilgore, graduating from high school in 1958.

She met her future husband, Wayne, while working at a movie theater as he attended LeTourneau Vo-Tech in Longview, Texas. They were married on April 10, 1959 in Longview and began farming near Edgerton, Kansas. In 1963, they moved to a farm outside of Hiawatha where they farmed and raised livestock.

Helen was a longtime member of Bethany United Church of Christ where she belonged to the Women's Guild. She volunteered with Mt. Zion Rustlers 4-H Club, and later worked at Coast-to-Coast in Hiawatha. She was a published author of her beloved poems, and her creative abilities were an inspiration to many. Helen was a graduate of Highland Community College. Education was important to her, and she ensured that all her children graduated with college degrees.

Survivors include daughters Cheryl Knabe of Galloway Township, NJ, Janet Rapp of Gladstone, MO, Karen McCune (Bill) of Plainville, KS, and son Christopher Knabe (Ann) of Hiawatha; eight grandchildren: Matthew McCune (Monica) of Plainville, Justin and Colt McCune of Plainville, Ryan Kraemer of Everett, WA, Caitlyn Kraemer of Galloway Township, Keagan and Jessica Rapp of Gladstone and Katherine Knabe of Hiawatha; two great-grandchildren: Samuel and Ayden McCune of Plainville; two sisters: Margaret Long of Texas and Catherine Long of New Mexico; sister-in-law Donna Moll (David) of Olathe, KS and brother-in-law Dr. Virgil Gonzalez of Tyler, TX, and beloved nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her husband, parents, and siblings Mary Gonzalez, Beverly Spillane, Sidney S. Long, Jr., Dorothy Smith, Martha Long and infant sister Theresa Long.

Visitation is planned for Wednesday, February 26th at Chapel Oaks Funeral Home with family present from 6:00-7:30. Celebration of life services will be at 10:30 Thursday, February 27th at Bethany United Church of Christ of Hiawatha, 303 N. 6th St. Pastor Shane Spangler will officiate. Interment will follow at Mt. Hope Cemetery, Hiawatha.

The family requests that, in lieu of flowers, memorials be given to Bethany United Church of Christ Memorial Fund in care of Chapel Oaks Funeral Home, 124 South 7th Street, Hiawatha, KS 66434.

Messages for the family can be sent to www.chapeloaksfuneralhome.com.