

Hiawatha, KS



Mildred “Elaine” (Sanders) Graham, age 94, was born on April 16, 1926 in Charlevoix, Michigan, the youngest of eight children, to Levi Howard and Mildred Mae (Wibert) Sanders. She passed away on November 27, 2020.

She grew up in Petoskey, Michigan where she attended school, graduating from Petoskey High School mid-semester in December, 1943.

In the summer of 1944 she met Oliver “Max” Graham. They married 6 weeks after meeting, September 3, 1944. They remained married until his passing on March 18, 2010. They had three children, Diana “Kay” Hostettler (Walt), Hiawatha, KS; Dale Lee Graham (Edwina), Houston, TX; and Beverly Jean Jones (the late Duane), Tomball, TX.

In 1958 she and Max moved their family from Grand Rapids, Michigan to Camarillo, California. Several years later they relocated to Scottville, Michigan, later returning to the Santa Barbara, California area. In October 1988 they moved to Hiawatha, Kansas and the next year to Robinson, Kansas, to be near their oldest daughter Kay and her family. Following her husband’s passing, she moved to Maple Grove Complex in Hiawatha. In April, 2019, she moved to Maple Heights Nursing Home in Hiawatha.

Elaine volunteered for several organizations throughout her adult life, serving as a Campfire Girls leader, helped to set up the Pleasant Valley Elementary School’s library (Camarillo, California), helped with mailings for the Brown County Kansas Area Agency on Aging, among many other projects.

When her children were all in school, she worked as a waitress for the Ranch Boy Restaurant in Camarillo, California and for bakeries in Camarillo and Santa Barbara, as well as at 3M. After settling in Santa Barbara she worked as a supervisor for EDS, which was owned by Ross Perot, and later for a medical billing company in Fresno, California. Once they were settled in Robinson, Kansas, Elaine worked in the lunchroom at Robinson Middle School.

Elaine was preceded in death by her husband, Max, her parents, and all of her brothers and

sisters and their spouses, and several nephews.

She is survived by her three children, six grandchildren: Heather Rippin (Dave), Macomb, Michigan; Margaret Goodman (James Knight), St. Joseph, Missouri; Jennifer Windholz (Travis), Houston, Texas; Sarah Spadola, Katy, Texas; Deborah Neher, Fulshear, Texas; and Tanner Jones (Holly), Tomball, Texas; and 12 great grandchildren.

She will be remembered for her willingness to help others whenever needed.

Her body will be cremated and interred at Rose Hill Cemetery, Robinson, Kansas. A private family memorial service will be held at a later date. Chapel Oaks Funeral Home in Hiawatha, Kansas is in charge of arrangements.

Memorial gifts in Elaine's name are suggested to the Brown County Humane Society or the Brown County Food Bank, and may be sent in care of Chapel Oaks Funeral Home, 124 S. 7th Street, Hiawatha, KS 66434.

Remember the family during these difficult times by sending a card or note of remembrance to the family at [www.chapeloaksfuneralhome.com](http://www.chapeloaksfuneralhome.com)