

Horton, KS



Judith "Judi" LeAnn (Hedrick) Thomas passed away peacefully on February 5, 2021 at Hiawatha Hospital.

She was the only child of Vernon and Lucile Hedrick. She was born in Horton, Kansas in 1940 and celebrated her birthday every year on September 15th. Upon filing for Social Security when she retired, she discovered that she'd been celebrating on the wrong day! Her birth certificate said her birthday was actually the following day!

Judi was raised in Hiawatha. As long as she could remember, her paternal grandmother lived with them. Since her grandmother was always in the home, her aunts, uncles and cousins visited regularly and they were close. One cousin, Audrey (Dirst) Murphy, was raised by the girls' maternal grandparents so the girls grew up together. Audrey always considered Judi her little sister. Judi attended Hiawatha High School, graduating in 1958.

While working as a car hop at the Hiawatha Drive-In, she met Bill Thomas and it was a match made in Heaven. They dated for several years and were finally married on August 4th, 1961 in Horton and set up housekeeping in a small mobile home. The mobile home was in the yard of her husband's grandparents, who had raised him. Even though her grandmother-in-law never liked her, Judi was always kind and took care of her in her later years. Right after their marriage, Judi and Bill both worked at the Horton Headlight. Judi was the mother of two children: Lorelei "Lori" and Matthew. She was a stay-at-home mom for several years, then got a job as a CNA at Horton Hospital and moved up to Ward Clerk. She worked there for nearly 30 years before retiring. She and Bill took an EMT course in 1978 and they served on the Horton Ambulance Service for sixteen years volunteering days, nights and weekends for all of those years. She did countless patient transfers, worked car accidents and many other calls, but she never liked riding backwards. Judi enjoyed reading novels, watching criminal investigation shows and doing puzzles. She loved country music. There were always animals in the home and Judi showered them with love.

Judi was preceded in death by her husband, Bill on May 7, 2020 and her parents, Vernon and Lucile (Bestwick) Hedrick.

She is survived by: her daughter Lori (Scott) Halfhide of Concordia, KS; son Matt (Tina) Thomas of Horton; three grandsons, Kody and Kasey Halfhide of Concordia and Connor Thomas of Horton; and several cousins including Audrey (John) Murphy, Citrus Springs, FL.

A joint memorial service for Bill and Judi will be held when family can gather safely. Inurnment will be at Horton Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to the Heart of Jackson Humane Society in Holton, KS or the National Orphan Train Complex in Concordia, KS. and may be sent in care of the Dishon-Maple-Chaney Mortuary in Horton, Kansas. A special message may be sent to the family at [www.dishon-maple-chaney.com](http://www.dishon-maple-chaney.com)