

Hiawatha, KS



Mary Margaret O'Dell, age 84, died peacefully at her home March 16, 2023.

She was born December 5, 1938 in Horton, KS to John and Maude O'Dell. Margaret should be considered a pioneer as she and her mother worked with other parents and their children in the development of a place where life and work skills could be taught so that people with disabilities could live and work as independently as possible. Their advocacy resulted in first the Brown County Day Care Center which became Brown County Sheltered Workshop and then BCDS. This organization assisted Margaret to live more independently, first in a group home and then in her own apartment with her cat, Samantha Ann. She was also assisted to work at jobs which included USD #415 elementary lunchroom, Bank of Horton and Hiawatha Physical Therapy Dept. People with disabilities didn't work at jobs in the 70- and so Margaret and her friends were ahead of the times.

Margaret faithfully attended the First Christian Church- Sunshine Class. She loved to bowl, attend dances, her cats, to dress her best including bows and jewelry every day, and WORK! Unlike most people who retire in their 60-, Margaret refused to retire and continued to work at BCDS up until her death.

Margaret was preceded in death by her parents and a brother, Paul O'Dell.

Survivors include her brother and sister-in-law Bob and Konni O'Dell of Kissimmee, FL, nephew John O'Dell of Lumberton, NC, Debra Brabham of Kissimmee, FL and niece Tracy Koch of Kissimmee, FL; a great niece Evie Koch, great nephew Eli Koch and many BCDS friends.

A celebration of Margaret- life will be held at 11:00 AM, March 23, 2023 at the Dishon Maple-Chaney Mortuary, Horton, KS. Interment will follow at St. Leo- Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions can be made to Brown County Developmental Services, Inc. 400 S. 12 St. Hiawatha, Kansas 66434. A special message may be sent to the family at www.dishon-maple-chaney.com

