



Retha Jean Curtis

August 6, 1923 - June 15, 2022

Retha Jean Curtis was born on August 6, 1923 in Pirtle, Oklahoma, to Laura Ferguson Decker and Charlie Petty "Son" Decker. Often moving as a young girl with her family, she attended school at Bennington, Tuttle, and Caddo, and finally graduated high school from Blue. Working her way through college, she graduated with a bachelor's degree in Education from Southeastern Oklahoma State University, where she met her love, Otho "Sweetpea" Curtis. They married on December 24, 1943. Sweetpea left to serve in World War II shortly thereafter and she began her teaching career at Nida, where she taught English, Typing, Shorthand, and Office Practice. In 1949, they moved their family, now complete with a daughter and son, to Newcastle where she taught there until retirement in 1984. She loved teaching, treasured her students, and would tell stories about many of them even until recently. She also taught both of her own children Senior English. They, as well as many others, would say she was the best teacher they ever had. Retha had many interests and hobbies, including gardening, dancing (you could find them at the Moose Lodge every Saturday), shopping (every day at the mall and then to Luby's to recharge), decorating her home, playing pitch with her family, researching her genealogy, traveling, and cooking (best homemade bread, pineapple upside down cake and pecan pie, hands down!). She was an excellent seamstress, pianist, and writer. Her grandkids remember her as a good listener with a great sense of humor, a snazzy dresser, and a best friend. Her love, Sweetpea, passed in 2008 after nearly 65 years of marriage and she

moved to Muskogee in 2013 to live with her daughter. Her son followed shortly thereafter to be near to her. When the time came for her to move to a nursing facility in April 2021, Eastgate Village got a special visitor, whom they loved so well. She was spirited, feisty, funny, and kept them all hopping. She "got her wings" (her words two days before she passed) on June 15, 2022.

She will be greatly missed. She dedicated her life to the Lord at an early age and was baptized in the Blue River at Pirtle. She recommitted her life to Him again several months ago.

She is survived by her daughter, Juliana Sherrell, and son, Alan Decker Curtis, both of Muskogee; granddaughter, Kristi Schafer and her husband Randy and boys Braden and Bennett, of Oklahoma City; granddaughter Jennifer Curtis and daughter Viviana Wittrock of Scottsdale, Arizona; granddaughter Jeanie Bishop and husband Jason and boys Blake, Brett, Ben, and Jaden, of Muskogee, and their daughter Brittini Markum and husband Luke, and two kids, Paisleigh and Kooper of Stillwater; and granddaughter Amanda Noel and husband Jonathan and their children Gabriel and Emelia, of Raleigh, North Carolina. She is also survived by numerous nieces and nephews and their families, whom she loved dearly. She was preceded in death by her parents, and her three brothers: Paul, Charles, and Jack.

Visitation will be from 5pm to 7pm Wednesday, June 22, 2022 at Wilson-Little Funeral Home, Newcastle, OK. Funeral services will be held 10:00 A.M.

Thursday, June 23, 2022 at the First Baptist Church in Newcastle, followed by a graveside service in Durant at Highland Cemetery at 3:00pm.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests contributions be made to Southeastern Oklahoma State University in memory of Retha Jean Curtis via the Southeastern Foundation. Contributions may be made online at www.se.edu/giving. Contributions by check may be mailed to: Southeastern Foundation, 425 West University Blvd., Durant, OK 74701.

Tribute Wall

LS

“ Mrs. Curtis taught me English for 3 years. She wonderful! Such as asset to my education. She gave me the confidence and knowledge I needed to be successful in my banking career. She was always beautiful and wise. I thank her and think of her often.



Lisa Miller Sweet - June 22, 2022 at 12:00 AM

SL

“ Mrs. Curtis was my English teacher and my inspiration. I retired after 39 years of teaching. She was the best! She cared for her students but when it came time for class, it was all business! I will never forget her!

Sue Lingenfelter - June 22, 2022 at 12:00 AM