



Jean Smiley

October 9, 1923 - April 29, 2019

Whatever she was doing, whether in the classroom, in her home, on the dance floor, and especially in church, Jean Smiley joyfully lived life. Jean passed away Monday, April 29 and is now living with Jesus and the saints in Heaven. She was 95.

A life-long resident of East Lynn in Vermilion County, she was born Lois Jean Lawrence and began excelling immediately, graduating valedictorian of her high school class and entering the University of Illinois. She interrupted her college career to marry Arthur Smiley on July 11, 1943. He preceded her in death. While Art was overseas serving in World War II, Jean worked as a secretary at Food Machinery Corporation, taking the train each day from East Lynn to Hoopeston. During the war, she loved traveling to New York City to meet Art when he was on leave, dancing to the sounds of Glenn Miller, Harry James and Benny Goodman. Throughout their lives Jean and Art traveled world-wide.

After the War Jean and Art made their home in East Lynn and raised four children. Lawrence (Rachel), Indianapolis; John (Kendra), East Lynn; Ann Smiley-Oyen, Ames, IA; and Wynn, Indianapolis. Jean had nine grandchildren and 15 great grandchildren.

Deciding to finish her degree at 38, Jean re-entered the University of Illinois earning both her bachelor's and master's degrees in education. Upon graduation, she was pressed into service to help address a state-wide teacher shortage and began teaching kindergarten, half-days in Rankin and half-days in East Lynn public schools. In 1973 when Hoopeston-East Lynn consolidated school district was formed, Jean taught at John Greer Elementary School. But the majority of her 25-year career was teaching first graders at Maple Elementary School. Her passion in the classroom was helping children learn how to read.

Jean was an innovator in the classroom. While in graduate school, she was introduced to a program called the "Physiology of Readiness," which focused on getting children ready to read. This program was designed on the premise that practicing movement tasks, such as walking a balance beam, simultaneously drawing circles on the blackboard with both hands, and tracking a ball swinging on a string, readied the brain for school learning, and

specifically for reading. She used this program in her classroom and shared it at teacher workshops. While controversial in the 1960's and 1970's, current research supports this perspective.

She was the ultimate party planner, teaching all week and then hosting gatherings such as family Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter weekend events including cooking meals for more than thirty people. Jean's love for parties was apparent at her 90th birthday celebration where she successfully blew out 90 candles ablaze on a coconut cream pie, her favorite dessert. Jean's homemade ice cream and buttermilk pancakes were two family favorites.

Prayer was central to Jean's life and the fuel that ignited her joy. Her faith was energized at the United Methodist Church renewal movement, Aldersgate. The annual conference was a spiritual home for Jean, each year becoming an ever-growing reunion of loving friends she made across the country. Jean prayed for thousands of people, including every student she taught. She epitomized the scripture verse, "Rejoice in the Lord always, again I say rejoice!" Her love for others lasted until her final days. Nurses and caregivers at Heritage Health in Hoopeton, where she was living, routinely told stories about Jean's love and concern for them and their families.

Jean's legacy includes her family, generations of children who learned to read in her classroom and the untold people whose lives were changed through her kindness, intercessory prayer and joyful love.

A visitation will be held 4:00 – 7:00 P.M. Friday May 3, 2019 at Anderson Funeral Home 427 E. Main St. Hoopeton, IL. The funeral service will be held at 2:00 P.M. Saturday May 4, 2019 at the East Lynn Community Fellowship Church 41428 Main St., East Lynn, IL, with Larry Johnson officiating. Burial will follow in the East Lynn Cemetery.

Memorials may be made to the East Lynn Community Fellowship Church P.O. Box 146, East Lynn, IL 60932.

Cemetery

East Lynn Cemetery

East Lynn, IL,

Events

MAY **Visitation** 04:00PM - 07:00PM

3

Anderson Funeral Home

427 E. Main St., Hoopston, IL, US, 60942

MAY **Funeral Service** 02:00PM

4

East Lynn Community Fellowship

East Lynn, IL, US, 60932

MAY **Burial**

4

East Lynn Cemetery

East Lynn, IL, US

Comments



“ Jean (and Art) were wonderful Christians. We knew them through Aldersgate Renewal Ministries and always enjoyed being with them. Jean and Art led a Healing and Wholeness Weekend at our church in Marshfield Wis. about 20 years ago. We also had them up our way for a Lay Witness Mission and a Life in the Spirit Weekend. The love and power of God flowed through them in many ways. Their ministry in Illinois and Wisconsin goes on and will not be forgotten.
Rev. Kerry and Sue Wilson, (now in Pardeeville Wis.)
And I share these reflections to lift them up in your hearts, I share on behalf of the Board of Directors of Aldersgate Renewal Ministries.
Kerry Wilson
President of the ARM Board and Council

KERRY Wilson - September 25, 2019 at 12:23 PM



“ We are very sorry that we will not be able to attend the service for Jean because of the miles between us; however, we would like to write a few memories in her honor. We remember Aunt Jean's love of life and the infectious laugh she carried with her. It was so fun to hear her laugh around the River campfire, she brought a lot of joy to those in her presence.
One time when Christmas came around, she helped host a dinner for the extended family. She put a lot of effort into the meal. The beauty of the long elegantly set table with the scrumptious food was a very pleasant memory. She truly blessed us with her food, family and home.
Since we are teachers; we had conversations about education with Jean. She was adamant about including phonics in the teaching of reading. Her dedication to teaching her first graders to read was apparent. We saw her confidence, commitment and love that she had for preparing her students for the future.
Our observance of her dedication to her husband, family and her Lord was also evident. God blessed Jean with wonderful gifts for her to share with the many people in her life.
We're sure Jean is enjoying being with her Lord, husband and the friends and family that have passed before her. She is probably laughing and dancing with all of them right now.
She will be very much missed, and our very sincere and heartfelt condolences go out to all those she has left behind.

In Love,
Jan and Kathy

Janice Myers - May 04, 2019 at 07:11 PM



“ Thank you, Jan and Kathy, for sharing those memories. We will be remembering your dad and my mom at the river service this year. (I have the church service.)

Ann Smikey-Oyen - May 14, 2019 at 04:41 AM



“ I saw Jean's obituary in the news-gazette and I wanted to let you know how much I enjoyed seeing her for her eye exams. I know it has been awhile since I did an eye exam on her, but I fondly remember her coming in to my office over the years. She was always upbeat and so proud of her children. You have my sincere sympathy on your loss.

Flavel Heyman, O.D.

Flavel Heyman - May 02, 2019 at 09:31 PM



“ Thank you. She was a dear person.

Ann Smikey-Oyen - May 14, 2019 at 04:42 AM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Jean Smiley.



May 02, 2019 at 06:42 PM



“ From: ATO Foundation Board of Governors purchased the Treasured Lilies Spray for the family of Jean Smiley.



From: ATO Foundation Board of Governors - May 02, 2019 at 03:04 PM



“ Sweet Tenderness was purchased for the family of Jean Smiley.





May 02, 2019 at 02:53 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Jean Smiley.



May 02, 2019 at 12:16 PM



“ Sweet Tenderness was purchased for the family of Jean Smiley.



May 02, 2019 at 11:49 AM



“ Basket Full of Wishes was purchased for the family of Jean Smiley.



May 02, 2019 at 11:23 AM



“ Beautiful Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of Jean Smiley.





“ RIP, Mrs. Smiley. Earthly job well done.

cjc - May 02, 2019 at 01:36 AM



“ Shirley Meunier lit a candle in memory of Jean Smiley



Shirley Meunier - May 01, 2019 at 06:22 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Jean Smiley.



May 01, 2019 at 12:32 PM



“ Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Jean Smiley.



May 01, 2019 at 12:14 PM



“ Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Jean Smiley.





May 01, 2019 at 11:18 AM



“ Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Jean Smiley.



May 01, 2019 at 11:10 AM



“ Our family is so sorry,Chris cried the first day of first grade i will never forget as they were calling out the names and Chris was crying because he wanted in Mrs Smileys class when they called his name and ran to Mrs Smiley and what a great year we had.

Pat Mccay - May 01, 2019 at 10:55 AM



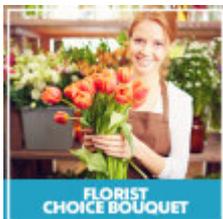
“ Jamie Smith sent a virtual gift in memory of Jean Smiley



Jamie Smith - May 01, 2019 at 10:27 AM



“ Florist Choice Bouquet was purchased for the family of Jean Smiley.



May 01, 2019 at 09:18 AM



“ She will be deeply missed in the Hall way of the nursing home. She always had a smile on her face. Always was dressed so nice. She was a great lady. Linda Skinner Loy. My sympathies for the Smiley family

linda skinner loy - May 01, 2019 at 09:03 AM



“ I pure and abiding love for Christ, her family and other people. What a great legacy to leave on her way to heaven.

Kevin Phillips - May 01, 2019 at 07:10 AM



“ Nina L Drollinger lit a candle in memory of Jean Smiley



Nina L Drollinger - May 01, 2019 at 12:22 AM



“ I was blessed to have Mrs. Smiley as my kindergarten teach at East Lynn in about 1968. I loved her with all my heart although i did bite and kick her and the school nurse when they tried to take me for a hearing test. I know i didn't understand what was happening. She was so understanding and patient which made me love her even more. I also went to ELUMC with Art and Jean and they were both inspirational to me to live a Godly life. I remeber Jean driving her little red, Astin Martin?, car and how cool I thought that was. I am confident that she has been welcomed into God's Kingdom!

Tambra Carswell - April 30, 2019 at 11:32 PM



“ My thoughts and prayers for all of you.

arcelia watson - April 30, 2019 at 11:23 PM



“ Jeannie Miller lit a candle in memory of Jean Smiley



Jeannie Miller - April 30, 2019 at 09:15 PM



“ My sympathy and prayers to all of the Smiley Family at this time of your mom's passing! She was a great lady and I loved to visit with her even in these last few years at Autumn Fields and at Heritage Health! She always made me laugh! What's great influence she had on so many young people! What a great life she had! May your memories bring you much happiness! She led a full life! The East Lynn Community was a better place because of your mom!

Diane (Wilson) Rogers

Diane Rogers - April 30, 2019 at 09:11 PM