In Memoriam

Nicki Keele

Ernestine "Ernie" (Holcomb) Wright entered this world on November 7, 1927, with a fierce determination: ready to learn, ready to experience, ready to love life, ready to teach. She passed away with that same fierce determination to do it her way on June 1, 2016. Edmond, Oklahoma, is where her parents Ernest Monar and Julia Miriam (Heald) Holcomb lived when Ernie was born. As a young girl, she was considered a "tomboy," secretly wishing she were a boy, playing basketball, exploring, and riding horses. Being out-of-doors seemed to be her favorite pastime. She played on the Sayre girls' basketball team and graduated from Sayre High School in 1945.

After attending college at Oklahoma A&M for 1 1/2 years, Glenn Wright stole her heart, and they were married on March 21, 1947. They made their home in Weatherford, and both finished college at Southwestern State College. Later, she also earned her masters at Southwestern and then began working on her doctorate at OSU. She did post graduate work not only at OSU but also at OU, Central State University, Colorado University, University of Northern Colorado, and Georgia.

While living in Weatherford, their son Glenn "Harold" and their daughter Miriam "Suzan" were born. The family then moved to Erick for Glenn to teach. Another job opportunity led the family to Anadarko for 2 years. Their third child Jake William, II, was born in Anadarko. In 1956 they moved back to Weatherford until 1964 when they moved to Houston; and then in 1967, they moved back to Weatherford for their last move.

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Ernie's teaching career began at Burns Flat before accepting her Southwestern State University position, teaching in the physical education department until she retired in 1988. She was a member of the Faculty Senate for six years, and she was a women's Intramural director.

Due to her position at Southwestern, she was asked to serve on the Oklahoma Special Olympics board as area coordinator. Ernie was the founder of the Weatherford area Special Olympics which is still strong and active. She served in this capacity for nine years, but she and her classes continued to assist with local swim and track meets; and for several years, she and her classes conducted Brownie Play Day.

Ernie was a member of the Oklahoma Recreation and Parks Society; National Recreation and Parks Society; American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance; Oklahoma Association of Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance; Higher Education Alumni Association; Kappa Delta Pi; P.E.O.; Daughters of the American Revolution; and V.F.W. Auxiliary. She was a Water Safety Instructor Trainer and CPR Instructor Trainer. At the age of 65, Ernie made her first Hole-in-One on April 23, 1992, at the Weatherford Golf Course on the 8th hole. She was always proud of that accomplishment.

She was preceded in death by her husband Glenn, her parents, her son Jake, and a brother David. Ernie is survived by her son Harold and wife Carol of Weatherford, her daughter Suzan Gates and husband Winston, 5 grandchildren, 11 great children, and a number of nieces and nephews. Services were held Saturday, June 4, 2016 at the First United Methodist Church with Rev. Lynn Brack, officiating.

Burial was in the Greenwood Cemetery under the direction of Lockstone Funeral Home.

References: Lockstone Funeral Home Weatherford, OK