



Sandra Kay White

December 28, 1936 - September 29, 2017

Sandra “Sandy” Kay White, 80, of Kansas City, MO died peacefully on Friday, September 29, 2017. Sandy was the daughter of Beuford and Kate Jones and was born on December 28, 1936 in Scottsbluff, NE. She graduated from Torrington, WY, High School. Sandy met her husband, William “Bill” White, while they both attended Barnes Business College in Denver, CO, and they wed on September 29, 1956. Two children were born to the union – Gary William and Lori Kay. Sandy was a bookkeeper for small businesses and helped her husband with the family business. Sandy leaves behind her daughter, Lori Neely, of Kansas City, MO. She was preceded in death by her parents, husband, and son. Sandy died on her 61st wedding anniversary.

Family and friends are invited to share their memories at a graveside service held at Mt. Olivet Cemetery, Golden, CO on a date to be determined.

Sandra Kay White

1936 - 2017

Sandra Kay White was born to Beuford and “Kate” Jones on December 28, 1936. When Sandy was a baby, the family homesteaded a farm in western

Nebraska. They cleared the land and built the home and the barn. The family was one of the first to have a car, one of the first to have a bathroom (put in soon after Sandy was born), and one of the first to have a television. Sandy continued this tradition of being “the first to have” when she grew up...she was the first to have a microwave, the latest kitchen gadgets, the best replacements windows.

Buford was a strong leader in the community and many came to him for advice. Kate was an excellent cook, and the neighbors often would stop by just as supper was on, and they'd have to add extra plates to their large dining room table.

Sandy had three siblings. Beulah was 17 when Sandy was born; Daryl was 9; and then she had a younger sister, Connie, born six years after her in 1943. Beulah had a daughter, Cheryl, not long after Sandy was born, so Sandy had a niece about her age. Her cousin, Tommy, was the same age and lived nearby, so they were very close growing up.

Sandy had a baby book which she filled out herself when she was twelve: “My health record was not so good the first six weeks. I didn't like mother's milk but when they changed my diet to S.M.A. was it ever good!!! When I was 3 months old I had the flu and nearly had pneumonia. I was a very sick baby for about six weeks.

I continued to have a terrible time until I was six months old. My family had me on every kind of baby food when they were desperate Thelma Nash gave us Georgie's formula. Did I ever snap out of it then!

I had the measles in January 1938. I was rather sick for several days.

Due to the measles, Sandy lost sight in one eye. Sandy had a rough start in life!

When she was four years old, the young family drove to Denver to have a specialist assess her. She kept the assessment which notes that Sandy didn't like to go outside and that she wasn't very social.

She was a daddy's little girl. She loved being around and doing things with her

dad. When he got a new chair, she had to have a chair just like it. Her dad was her world, her everything.

Her parents helped start a school for her and her cousins to attend. The community one-room schoolhouse was a quarter of a mile down the road from their farm house, so she didn't have to walk too far to go to school.

The doctors didn't want her straining her one good eye, and so she was discouraged from reading as a young child. She read the "reader's digest" version of books for her book reports in high school. The only thing she ever "read" was the newspaper. She mostly enjoyed the papers for the advertisements as she grew older.

She spent much of her childhood in the kitchen cooking with her mother, sister, and aunt. Sandy's mom, Kate, was in charge. One person would work on the salad, another the meat, another set the table...it was a community event getting the meals ready to get the family and the farm "hands" fed.

The days started off with a heavy breakfast. Once breakfast was cleaned up, chores were done around the house, and then it was time to start thinking about "dinner" – the main meal of the day, served at noon. All farm workers were fed. The table holding twelve was often full. Once dinner was cleaned up, then it was time to start on "supper." There was always a dessert – a cake, cookies, a pie – sweets were a part of dinner and supper meal.

The community didn't have a lot of students, so for high school, Sandy was bussed to the nearest high school, which was across the Nebraska state line, into Torrington, WY. Because she would get sick riding the bus, she ended up living with one of the ladies in Torrington (Mrs. Spencer), which made her life a little easier until she graduated.

She went to college at Barnes Business School in Denver, CO. Soon after she started classes it was clear that many of her friends were "coupling up." She met Bill White at the school. The two were married in September of 1956. Bill and Sandy settled down in Denver where Bill was a salesman. They had their first child, Gary, and bought their first home. Then Lori came along in

1961, and they needed more room. So they purchased their house on Racine Street in Aurora, Colorado. They used to say they moved into their first home with a baby in the basket, and then also moved into their second home with a baby in a basket. Sandy ended up living in this home on Racine from 1962 to 2013, 51 years.

Bill was a salesman, and together Bill and Sandy started a business out of their home, L&G (Lori and Gary) Mercantile. Bill sold household goods out of his station wagon and Sandy did the accounting. Lori and Gary helped by counting the change. The business was initially a success, but the business began to struggle, and they lost it. They tried a couple of different companies, but both times the business folded due to the changing times.

Sandy's husband, Bill, suffered a heart attack when they had been married for nine years. He immediately stopped smoking cigarettes and lived another 22 years. After that heart attack, Sandy always lived in fear of him having another heart attack.

Sandy went back to work after Lori started kindergarten. Sandy worked as a bookkeeper. She worked for a wide range of small businesses in Denver – trucking companies, laundry mat suppliers, and candy makers. One time she landed a job as the accountant for a night club and discovered she was working for “the mob.” They threatened her at one point...and she always feared for Lori's safety

Bill, Sandy, and their young children, Gary and Lori enjoyed summer vacations together, and traveled in their station wagon to visit Disneyland, to Calgary, Alberta, Canada, as well as taking two trips to Mexico where Bill purchased merchandise to sell for his business.

In 1974 Sandy was in a car accident. The car was totaled. Sandy had years of back, neck and arm pain, and had to have four surgeries from its effects.

Bill and Sandy were each other's best friends and enjoyed their life together.

In their younger years they went dancing on Saturday nights. After the kids left the house, they traveled together.

Sandy was an excellent cook. She enjoyed collecting a myriad of recipes.

After both kids left the home, she and her husband, Bill, took microwave cooking lessons and learned how to cook many dishes using this new kitchen convenience. Gary used to say that it looked like a tornado had gone through the kitchen after she got through cooking!

Sandy's husband, Bill, passed away unexpectedly in 1987 when Sandy was only 51. She tried to work his business, but being a salesperson was not her gift! She struggled to make ends meet, working any job that would hire her. She worked as a restaurant hostess, a garage attendant, a casino cashier, as a barista in coffee shops at the Denver Airport. These were difficult years for her, and she often worked two jobs at a time to survive.

The financial struggle lessened when Sandy was old enough to receive Bill's social security (1998), and then even more when she took out a reverse mortgage on her home in 2002. Finally, she was "retired," and never missed all the struggles involved in going to work.

Both of her kids moved to Los Angeles for jobs in the 1980's as Colorado's economy was struggling. They moved back to Colorado in 1997, Gary moving in with her, Lori living across town. She was glad to have her kids home.

Her son, Gary, was diagnosed with melanoma in 1996. Sandy felt like Gary came home from California to die. He ended up living most of his last years with Sandy, and passed away in 2003. These were difficult times for Sandy, losing her only son. As she often said, no parent should ever have to bury their own child.

Lori moved to Missouri for a job in 2002. Gary died the following year. Eight months later Lori brought home her boyfriend, Brian, whom Sandy approved of. Sandy was happy when Lori married Brian, and took on Brian's family of four kids and six grandchildren.

Sandy enjoyed shopping. She would look through the paper and see what was on sale, then get in her car and go and get the "deals." She also enjoyed taking walks. When she visited her sister on the farm, the women would take off after dinner and walk several miles. Later, one of her long-time neighbors, Doris, and she would take a good long walk after dinner most every night they

could make it work. Even after she was in a nursing care center, she would pace the halls to try to get her walks in. Then, she would shuffle down the hall, back in forth, in her wheel chair.

Sandy had a great sense of humor. When her family would get together they would start telling jokes. She would contribute “one liners” that added to the fun. In her last years she could make the nurses and aides laugh with her wit. In 2013 Sandy was diagnosed with dementia, and she started to “forget” how to get home and was struggling to manage her money. Then, in January of 2014 as Sandy was finishing her walk and was close to home, her hip broke – she didn’t fall and break it – it broke and she fell. She had a partial hip replacement. After she was out of rehab, she agreed to move to Kansas City to live with her daughter and husband, Lori and Brian. The arrangement lasted for six months.

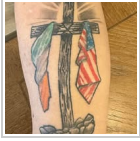
She spent her last three years in a nursing care facility. She always wished she could go home, though there was no longer a home to go to, and she never realized her own diminished abilities – she was a fighter to the end. Sometimes she even led “revolts” with other patients trying to “break out” of her locked unit. Some of the same nursing staff cared for her the entire time. For two years of this time, one of the guys on her unit looked like her son, Gary. She lit up when he came into the room. She treated him as a son. He treated her as a grandmother. The best news is that they had each other, which was a precious gift.

Sandy had a reconciliation with her sister, Connie, whom she hadn’t talked to in over 30 years just months before her death. She very much enjoyed the visit, and didn’t seem to remember there was an issue between them, but did know it had been a long time since they had seen each other. Yes, there are gifts to dementia!

Sandy had been declining due to her dementia for months. Lori visited her mom as often as she could, daily near the end, and always concluded a visit with “I love you, Mom.” Sandy replied, “I love you, too” until she couldn’t talk

any longer. The hospice nurse was giving her report to Lori – actually, mostly a good report including a good blood pressure, pulse, and respiration. Lori asked the nurse to tell her Sandy loved her, which the nurse did. The nurse reports that Sandy immediately changed. She died ten minutes after hearing her daughter loved her, as if that was what she was waiting to hear. Sandy passed away on her 61st wedding anniversary – September 29, 2017.

Tribute Wall



“ *What a powerful presence she was! I was her neighbor for 20 years and saw in her memories of my own mother. Gotta take care of Mom, was what I tried to do. Sandy, we're going to miss you, but know you're pain free and in a better place. Love Michael and Shirley McGonigal*

Michael McGonigal Sr - October 04, 2017 at 09:48 PM