



## Mrs. Anita Vernice McCluskey

December 5, 1936 - May 15, 2019

A Celebration of Life service for Anita Vernice McCluskey, will be held Thursday, May 23, 2019 at 2pm, at the chapel of the Willow Funeral Home, LLC. Mrs. McCluskey passed away May 15, 2019 at her home. She was born Dec. 5, 1936 at Dolores, Colorado to Henry V. Gardner and Clara Major Gardner. She graduated from Graham High School in Graham, Texas. On Oct. 15, 1954 she was married to Jimmie Ray McCluskey in Albuquerque, N.M. Being married to a career Air Force Serviceman meant lots of traveling. As an 18 year old bride she was on a ship to Burtonwood Air Force Base in England where she and Jimmie lived for 3 years. Both of her children were born there. Over 20 years as an Air Force wife she lived in California, Michigan, Nebraska, Luzon Island in the Philippines, and finally Missouri. In 1977, Jim and Vernice moved to Willow Springs where they carved out a farm in the area.

Vernice was very active in raising her family. Her family saw her as a Vacation Bible school teacher, Girl Scout leader, Sunday school teacher, GA leader or a volunteer in the community that they lived in. Most of her life she was a homemaker, but later she began working as a dental assistant at first volunteering with the Red Cross and later as career. When she wasn't working, she was an avid gardener. She and Jimmie always had a big garden and she was good at preserving what the garden produced. While Jimmie loved to go fishing, Vernice loved to go camping. Her favorite thing was sitting by the campfire and roasting marshmallows. Even at eighty, her grandkids could count on Granny taking them to the pond to roast marshmallows with them.

After moving to Willow Springs, she was active with the Native Plant Society of West Plains, Hutton Valley Neighborhood Watch, and the Hutton Valley quilters. You could often see her at local garage sales buying up material to cut up to make quilt top squares. The quilt tops that she pieced together by hand were then made into quilts by the St. Paul Lutheran Church quilters' guild and sent to the Lutheran World Relief. Some of her quilt tops were made into quilts to be donated to local organizations to help worthy causes. She cared about conservation and preserving wild spaces to be enjoyed by families and animals alike. She loved the birds that came to her yard and tried to make it a place where they could always find food, natural and from a feeder. She enjoyed the Native Plant Society "hikes." She learned to identify lots of native wildflowers. She enjoyed pressing

flowers with her friends and making her own cards to share.

Vernice was very supportive of the Star Theater in Willow Springs. She was very proud of her hometown. She always made time to go to the concerts and plays to show she cared. She is survived by her husband, Jimmie Ray, her daughter, Verna Fuller and husband, Earl, of Willow Springs; 2 grandchildren, Brad Fuller and wife Lisa of Tulsa, Ok., Jessica Zak and husband, Clayton, of Williamsport, In. ; 3 great-grandchildren Andrew Fuller, Sydney Fuller, and Dylan Zak; 2 sisters, Judy Gerstner and husband, Barry of Vero Beach, Fl., and Henrietta Wilson of Toowoomba, Australia.

Her parents, her son, Michael Raymond, and sister, Peggy Jean Jaquay preceded her in death. Memorial contributions can be made to the Good Samaritan Clinic in Mountain View, Missouri or Missouri Native Plant Society. Arrangements are under the direction of Willow Funeral Home, LLC. On-line condolences may be left at [www.willowfuneralhome.com](http://www.willowfuneralhome.com)

# Events

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**MAY** **Memorial Service** 02:00PM

**23**

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Willow Funeral Home, LLC

106 E 3rd St, Willow Springs, MO, US, 65793

# Comments

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“ I am so sorry for your loss, Mr. Jim, Verna and family. There are not enough words to express our sympathy. I'll try to share some of my memories and hope they bring you comfort, knowing Vernice gave us so much to share with others.

I don't remember the first time I met Vernice, her husband Jimmie and their daughter, Verna, but I was a young teen and this woman and her family quickly became cherished family. My Mom and Dad became their close friends, and as many Air Force families do, they became a second family to me. As our families melded over the years, Vernice taught me things my Mom didn't do, like knitting...I still don't do it well, but I can do it because this lovely woman took the time to teach me. I was always in awe of her ability to make these beautiful quilts. One remains on my bed today and I think of her every time I climb under it. Our families shared many other things like the love of nature, gardening, camping, fishing and birdwatching. My love of horses were nurtured at the McCluskey's farm. I am so thankful for their generosity of time. I spent many hours walking with my Mom and Vernice through the brush, learning about birds, flowers and other wonders of nature. Vernice continued to share her world not only with this girl, but my own children and then my grandchildren...she always had an encouraging word for them all, providing a game, included them in conversations and as she did with me, inspired them to look at the world as the wonder that it is!. I will miss her...Her phone calls, and letters, her optimism, encouragement and especially her example of independence. I can't thank Verna enough for sharing her parents with me all these years. I spent many happy hours on a porch swing talking, going to the garden, riding horses, feeding chickens and being chased by the geese, then heading to the pond, to swim or climb into a boat... Mr. Jim, I send you love and hugs and I will see you soon, Verna, thank you again for sharing your Mom with me in such a generous way. I love you and I'll see you soon, too. I am so grateful for each moment. I'll post a few pictures from our visit with my grandsons. They both enjoyed their moments with her. She made a very sweet quilt for Elijah last year. He loves it and is a treasured heirloom. Her journey on earth may be over, but I am sure we will all continue to share the love of the natural world with others as she did with us. Thank you Mrs. Mac! We will miss you, but I know you are doing in heaven what you did on this sweet earth; watching over nature, drinking coffee and catching up with loved ones.

Sandy Dorsey-Sternberger.



Sandy Dorsey-Sternberger - May 22, 2019 at 09:45 PM



“ So sweet of you to tell your stories of my Mom, thank you so much. Sure hope that you are recovering. I love the pictures!

Verna Fuller - May 26, 2019 at 12:07 PM

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“ Mr. & Mrs. Mac were like 2nd grandparents to us growing up. Vernice was a sweet, genuine, and sometimes feisty lady who will be sorely missed. My son just loved her! Our hearts are with Jim and the rest of the family <3

**Alaina Mayes** - May 18, 2019 at 05:11 PM

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“ We met Verniece several years ago and we hit it off immediately. I have treasured our friendship ever since. Verniece will be missed not only by her family but her many friends. Our heart goes out to Jim, Verna and all your families!

**Maxine and Ken Hogan** - May 17, 2019 at 11:01 AM

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“ 8 files added to the album Memories Album



**Lisa** - May 16, 2019 at 09:57 PM