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Lena Williams Hollifield

April 11, 1933 - March 31, 2022

Lena Williams Hollifield passed away on Thursday, March 31, 2022 at her home, surrounded by her family. She was born in Burke County on April 11, 1933 to the late Phifer and Carrie Williams.

Lena was the first in her family to attend college. She graduated from Berea College in Kentucky in 1956. She absolutely loved being a college student, where she worked at Fireside Industries and Boone Tavern. One of her jobs was to produce tapestries and woven materials. She often had the most precise pieces of work and she won many awards for her work. Lena even won a large weaving loom, which still holds a special place in the family home. As a college student, she worked every summer at a different country club to earn money for room and board. She enjoyed working at Sea Island, Georgia and Orchard Lake, Michigan. The family heard many stories of these summers and her work at Boone Tavern, near the Berea Campus.

In 1956, she moved to Frostproof, Florida for her first teaching job. She became a teacher at Frostproof High School, where she taught Home Economics. She enjoyed her first year and supported her beloved Bull Pups.

In 1957, she received an offer to teach at Drexel High School. She returned to the family home in Salem and began teaching at Drexel in the fall of 1957. At a teacher's

meeting in September, she was asked out by a handsome Geometry teacher, Reynolds 'Knox' Hollifield. The two married in 1960 and lived in Drexel. They were a huge part of all Drexel High School activities and especially loved the many proms, banquets, and dances for the Future Homemakers of America.

In 1974, Knox and Lena moved to the Salem area. They built what their daughter's call The Plantation and spent all their free time in the garden. The couple were asked to help open East Burke High School in 1975 and retired from Burke County Public Schools in 1990. Lena loved to walk among her many flower beds and her vegetable garden, which her brother Norman helped plant each year. Lena taught Sunday School at Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church for many years. She loved to visit the ladies from her class and help with the Senior Luncheons.

In addition to her parents, Lena was preceded in death by her husband, Reynolds Roosevelt “Knox” Hollifield; 3 sisters, Regina Kincaid, Joyce Burnette, and Ella Dale, a special sister-in-law, Hilda Williams; and her son-in-law, Steve Farlow.

She is survived by her daughters, Holly Hollifield Farlow of Morganton and Heather Hollifield (Pete Minter) of Conover; sister, Norine Miller (Ray); brother, Norman Williams; sister, Gena Kirby; and a number of nieces and nephews.

During the last few years of declining health, their girls cared for Knox and Lena in their beloved home, with their special Missy Cat. The family was blessed with wonderful caregivers, Mrs. Marie Cook and Mrs. Rita Johnson, who became part of the family. Burke Hospice (now Amorem) took excellent care of Lena and the family throughout this journey.

The family will receive friends from 3 to 4 p.m., Monday, April 4, 2022 at Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church. The funeral will be held at 4 p.m. in the church with the Revs. Keith Burkhart and Brian Buckner officiating. Burial will follow in the church cemetery.

Sossoman Funeral Home and Crematory Center is assisting the family with the arrangements.

Tribute Wall

No tributes added yet.