



Esther M. Highland

July 21, 1918 - October 5, 2015

Esther M. Highland, aged 97, died Monday night, October 5, 2015, following one of the best days of her life. The world is indeed a poorer place without Esther.

A Celebration of Life Memorial Service will be held at 4:30 p.m. Sunday, October 11th, at All Faiths Funeral Home. Reverend Lonnie Logan will officiate. There will be a gathering of family and friends following the service. She is survived by her son, Lynn, and daughter-in-law, Marsha Burns; her grandchildren, Sarah, Deborah, Eric, and Lara; great-grandchildren, Brittany, Sydney, Nolan, Aaron, Eric, Lynnzee, Ariel, Zach, and Sarah; and great-great grandchildren, Brenson, Wylder, Henry, and Cayson.

Esther was preceded in death by her husband, Roger; her parents, Clarence and Hazel (Scott) Alter; her sister, Helen; and her infant son, James.

Esther was born on July 21, 1918 on her parents' farm near Alda. Except for the time she was with her husband, Roger, in Fort Knox, Kentucky while he was attending Army basic training prior to WWII and during the last year in St. Paul, she lived her entire life in the Grand Island area. She was fortunate to have spent the last years of her life at Primrose and then at Brookefield Park surrounded by people who so lovingly cared for her.

Esther attended the Beet Ranch country school; she and the other "Beet Ranch Girls" met regularly for nearly 70 years to reminisce about riding mules to school in the snow and to keep up with events in each other's lives. She graduated from Grand Island Senior High and, after working in Grand Island

for several years, married Roger on September 6, 1940. At Esther's insistence, they were married in Concordia, Missouri by the same pastor who had baptized Esther as an infant. It worked...they were married for 63 years until Roger's death in 2003.

Son Lynn was born in 1944 and became the focus of Esther's life until his time in school allowed her to work part time at the Sears store in downtown Grand Island selling shoes. She made many lifelong friends at Sears and the "Sears Retirees" group stayed in touch for decades.

Esther's insistence on seeing the good in everyone made her the perfect volunteer; she was a passionate volunteer at many places in Grand Island. The Red Cross and St. Francis Hospital benefited enormously from her devotion to civic duty. She did volunteer work for well over 30 years and was honored by St. Francis as the Volunteer of the Year. Her first volunteer work as a cub scout Den Mother (everyone wanted to be in Esther's "pack") clearly led to a lifetime of service.

Esther was a decades-long member of TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly) and may have "lost just those 5 pounds" hundreds of times. Her TOPS friends will miss her.

Although Esther's family lived far away, Grandmother Esther (never "grandma") was an important part of the lives of her four grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren. She was ecstatic to become a great-grandmother four times. Esther delighted in annual visits to Alaska to see her "grands" and "great grands" and to marvel at Alaska's beauty and wildlife. She was most embarrassed when the Independent sports editor published a photo of her being dwarfed by a halibut she caught.

Esther's farm roots had a profound influence on her; she had a lifelong love of the land and, especially, birds and animals. She was happiest when "digging in the dirt" in her back yard – which was sufficiently frequented by squirrels, rabbits, and birds as to resemble an early Disney movie. Her family eagerly awaited the shipment of her world-renown tomatoes every August.

She not only loved animals but was active in making their lives better. Esther

was a founding (and lifelong) member of both the Grand Island Kennel Club and of the Central Nebraska Humane Society (CNHS). If, as Ghandi said, "... a society can be judged by how it treats its animals", Esther was a saint.

The Esther Highland Memorial Garden for Abused and Neglected Animals at the CNHS was dedicated on Sunday, October 4. Esther long looked forward to the completion of the garden and was honored at the ceremony for her commitment that made it possible. It was a wonderful day for her; she was able to greet many old and new friends who came to the event and to remember her beloved dogs. She died peacefully in her sleep the next night, Monday October 5. Esther left this world on a high note.

In lieu of flowers memorials are suggested to the Central Nebraska Humane Society.

Cemetery Details

Grand Island City Cemetery

Grand Island, NE

Previous Events

Celebration of Life Service

OCT 11. 4:00 PM (CT)

All Faiths Funeral Home
2929 S Locust St
Grand Island, NE 68801
(308) 398-2929
allfaiths@giallfaiths.com
<https://www.giallfaiths.com/>

Tribute Wall



“ *Esther M. Highland*

October 08, 2023 at 11:02 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of
Esther M. Highland.*



October 10, 2015 at 05:12 PM

SB

“*Esther was my friend and a dear friend to my mom, Connie Stroman. Esther and Connie met at Primrose Retirement Community in Grand Island. They so admired each other and enjoyed each other's company. Their friendship was not at all surprising as each of these ladies was an exceptional human being, a cut above the usual. Or two or three or four... They were kind, empathetic, genteel women with well-developed senses of humor and intellect, and an unmistakable love of life as evidenced in the sparkle in their beautiful blue eyes.*

In the last weeks of my mom's life, Esther encouraged my mom to eat when Mom didn't feel like it; talked loudly to her realizing that her hearing was diminishing. Mom said, "That lady has so much class." I said, "Mom, it takes one to know one"

When Mom died, we gave one of Mom's rings to Esther - - a dainty little ring with intertwined hearts to symbolize and remind Esther of their friendship.

Esther was so proud of her family. My husband's name is Roger as was Esther's. She was so proud of their son Lynn and all the grand kids.

And oh how she loved animals and they knew it. Our Siberian Husky Holly loved Esther and the feeling was mutual.

It is a blessing of my life to have known Esther. May she rest in Heavenly peace. I am certain that she and Connie are having quite the reunion.

My husband Roger, my brother Joel and our families send deepest sympathy to Esther's son, Lynn and all who loved her. Her time on this earth will continue to affect the world in a positive and loving way. Love never ends. I will never forget her.

Susan Sidell Brandt, daughter of Connie Stroman

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sob2900@aol.com

Susan Sidell Brandt - October 10, 2015 at 12:09 PM

GO

“ *Esther was most sweet dog lover - enjoyed & honored every minute i was fortunate enough to have shared with her!* ”



Gloria Ostrander - October 10, 2015 at 04:29 AM

GO

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Gloria Ostrander - October 10, 2015 at 04:29 AM

CH

“ Aunt Esther was one of the most loving, caring people of my childhood.in addition to my mother. I will never forget how special Janet and I felt at her house when she treated us to half and half on our cereal. We didn't know people lived like that.

I believe my tenderness toward animals came in part from Aunt Esther. I loved seeing all the parakeets and dogs. She groomed, trained and cleaned up, all the while passing her love for them on to us. I miss her and love her.

Aunt Esther is in a far better place now. She always exuded faith in Jesus Christ and optimism. I look forward to seeing her again one day.

Thank you.

Connie Haag - October 08, 2015 at 05:48 PM