



LaDonna Rose Halstead

September 21, 1939 - March 31, 2024

LaDonna R. Halstead was born on September 21, 1939, to Theodore (Ted) and Iola (Engel) Bockmann. She was born at St. Frances Hospital in Grand Island, NE. She attended District 77, a one-room school through eighth grade. This school had no indoor plumbing or electricity. The students graduated from eighth grade and went to Grand Island Senior High School. LaDonna was the only student in her grade at District 77. Students from the country schools were always known as “the country kids” in high school and even years later at class reunions. She graduated in 1957. Following high school graduation, she attended classes at Grand Island School of Commerce. She worked in the office at St. Paul’s English Lutheran Church and the Lincoln Fertilizer Plant when Howard Peterson was owner.

She married Robert E. (Bob) Halstead on September 23, 1959, at St. Paul’s English Lutheran Church in Grand Island, NE. They lived in Grand Island until January 1, 1967, when they moved to their home in Phillips. This union was blessed with three children, Sherrill, Rodney, and Douglas. Bob and LaDonna were married for 60 years before he died in 2019.

LaDonna is best known and remembered as THE CAKE LADY. She baked and decorated birthday cakes, graduation cakes, wedding cakes, and cakes for many other occasions for over 50 years. All of her desserts were wonderful to look at and to eat. LaDonna traveled throughout the country to learn and

perfect her decorating skills and share this passion. She was a member and officer of the Sweet Arts Cake Club in Grand Island and the International Cake Explorers Society (ICES). She taught Wilton cake decorating classes at several locations in Grand Island, including Ace Hardware, Joann's Fabrics, and Central Community College. LaDonna remained active in her extension club – The Gabby Group – and church circle until the time of her death. This church circle started as The Young Mothers group at St. Paul's Lutheran Church. These ladies hired babysitters to watch their children while they conducted their Bible study. Now many of these women are great-grandmothers.

LaDonna was very active in the Phillips community. She was a Brownie leader and served on several committees to improve the Phillips Park and build the community hall. She was instrumental in obtaining grant money and providing supervision of building the tennis court, basketball court, and playground at the park. She organized a craft club for Phillips kids in the park during the summers. She arranged for a tennis pro to come to Phillips to give lessons. She was one of the original members of the Women's Auxiliary for the Phillips Fire Department and completed EMT training. She served on the fire department for 17 years. LaDonna helped organize numerous Phillips Fall Festivals. She served on the Phillips 125th Anniversary celebration committee and worked tirelessly on the history book. LaDonna donated countless cakes to charities in the Phillips area to help raise money. She rarely said no when asked to make a cake for some event. LaDonna was actively involved in helping Bob with the summer baseball and softball programs for the Phillips Fire Department and later the Phillips Lions Club, Cub Scouts, and the Phillips Cemetery Board. LaDonna frequently volunteered to help at the concession stand at the ballpark for events.

LaDonna took great pride in her garden, her flowers, and her lawn. She loved watching the birds and squirrels from the patio or her large windows. She

often fed the wildlife that came around her house. The birds and the cats enjoyed the cake scraps that she threw out. She also fed cake scraps and frosting to neighborhood children when they came by.

Bob and LaDonna enjoyed many years of square dancing and traveling throughout the United States. The family made many great memories at Johnson's Lake, boating and waterskiing. Together, Bob and LaDonna took their children and grandchildren on vacations to Mahoney State Park, Branson, Missouri, Disney World, and a Caribbean cruise. Bob and LaDonna enjoyed traveling without the family also, including trips to Hawaii, the southwest United States, and a tour to Germany and Switzerland. One special trip LaDonna took was to the Rose Bowl Parade in 2002, with Rodney. This trip had been on her bucket list for years.

One of her greatest joys was watching her grandchildren grow up to be wonderful adults. Bob and LaDonna attended as many events as possible as their grandchildren grew, including dance recitals, volleyball, football, soccer games, and gymnastics meets. She took pride in hearing about their adventures in life. She has cherished every moment she has spent with her great-grandchildren.

LaDonna is survived by a daughter, Sherrill (Kent) Baumfalk of Lincoln, a son, Rodney (Amy) Halstead of Kearney, and a former daughter-in-law Kim Halstead of Eagle. Grandchildren Kaitlyn Baumfalk of Winter Garden, FL, Derek Baumfalk (fiancé Kristen Pfeifer), Stephanie (Ryan) Flink, Jonathan (Grace) Halstead, all of Lincoln. Great grandchildren Gloria Halstead, Emersyn Flink and Franklin Halstead. Sisters-in-law Marlene (Tom) Rohrbough, Babe Bamesberger of Grand Island, and Charlene Yonker of Holdrege. She is also survived by numerous nieces, nephews, and several cousins. Lifelong friends Carolyn Kuehner, Laveda Rathman, Merle Ann Schell. She is also survived by her faithful dog of 13 years, Buddy.

Proceeded in death by husband, son Douglas, parents, brothers, and sisters-

in-law Darryl (Diane) Bockmann, Dale (Marilyn) Bockmann, and sister-in-law Janet (Charley) Herndon.

Visitation will be on Sunday, April 7th from 5 – 7 pm at All Faith's Funeral Home. Funeral service will be held on Monday, April 8th at 10:30 am at St. Paul's Lutheran Church at 1515 South Harrison, Grand Island, NE. The burial will be at the Phillips Memorial Cemetery at 1:30 pm.

In place of flowers, memorials are suggested to St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Phillips Volunteer Fire Department, Phillips Community Hall, or donor's choice.

Previous Events

Public Visitation

APR 7. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

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

Funeral Service

APR 8. 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM (CT)

St. Pauls Lutheran Church
1515 South Harrison Street
Grand Island, NE 68801

Tribute Wall

JH

“ Dear Sherrill and Rodney, please accept my condolences on the loss of your mother. The obituary you prepared is beautiful and brought back many fond memories of my childhood. LaDonna and my mom were always good friends throughout the years. And of course, every cake we had on special occasions were your mom's. Unforgettable. God's blessings, John Heuermann

John Heuermann - April 03, 2024 at 05:57 AM

RF

“ Renne Family lit a candle in memory of LaDonna Halstead



Renne Family - April 02, 2024 at 11:32 PM

RF

“ Dear Sherrill & family,
Your in our thoughts and prayers. La Donna was a wonderful lady, excellent cake maker & had a caring heart. God give you comfort & peace.

Renne Family - April 02, 2024 at 11:30 PM

BL

“ She will be missed, We used to square dance with them, and got to know them when they moved to Phillips where we also resided until 1971 when we left the area. Always considered her a friend & a couple times in our travels we would stop & see them. Prayers of comfort to you all.

Betty Land - April 02, 2024 at 08:51 PM