



Leona J. Emry

May 27, 1939 - November 12, 2021

Leona Joan Emry, 82, lost her fight with cancer on November 12, 2021 in Kearney, Nebraska. Memorial services will be 11:00 a.m. Saturday, November 20, 2021 at O'Brien Straatmann Redinger Funeral Home in Kearney with Chaplain Steve Shanno officiating. Inurnment will take place at Ainsworth, Nebraska at a later date.

Leona was born on May 27, 1939 in Ainsworth, Nebraska to Kenneth and Ortha (Reynolds) Emry. Her roots run deep at the Niobrara River, south of Springview, Nebraska. The home place was a source of many stories told around her dinner table. Kenneth and Ortha worked earnestly to provide for their family of six who shared a small two room house, bathroom not included, kitchen later built on. The old adage "three miles, uphill both ways, through the snow" can be traced back to the ragtag Emry kids and close knit cousins Cleo, Don, Hubert and Louise as that was the route traveled to a small country school they attended. Leona would go on to high school in Ainsworth where she graduated in 1957.

Leona married Charles Mefferd on December 15, 1957. This union would be blessed with four beautiful children. Both Leona and Charlie worked for the telephone company. They relocated as the job required, eventually settling in the area around Grand Island, Nebraska. Hard work was instilled in her from a young age; she was very proud of her ability to provide for her family. Leona

would eventually retire from the Overhead Door Company in Grand Island to focus on her own interests.

Gardening was a skill Leona excelled at. Flowers and plants were in abundance in and around her home. Her family would be hard pressed to remember a summer without a garden, or a fall or winter without the comfort of her canned recipes. She found pleasure in feeding people, and there was always a spot for you at her table. Leona put great significance on music, art and education, and instilled these values in her children and everyday life. On occasion, and maybe to some dismay, her children adorned home sewn clothing she lovingly and skillfully made. Quilts, blankets, potholders or pillows may be sitting around your home, handmade with love. Paintings hang on her walls that reveal her attention to detail, her appreciation of nature, and her love of Nebraska landscapes. She played guitar, harmonica, and had an iconic whistle, pitch perfect, that still resonates in the memories of those closest to her.

The cardinal pictured on this memorial is representative of her love of birds. She always had bird feeders filled, and enjoyed studying their behavior from her window, the cardinal being her favorite. Though the squirrels were some drama for the birds, she managed to have several "Mama Squirrels" who would frequent her back door for a handful of pecans. Grandchildren found this activity most entertaining. Leona also had mama cats, a few family dogs, and her beloved bucket calf, Ba Ba. She was a mother to not only her children, but all walks of life. Leona might have considered mothering to be her finest trait.

Leona was always eager to travel and never shied away from new experiences. Many weekends she could be found sailing around Nebraska, floating across dance floors, meeting new people and creating lasting friendships. She greeted people with an open heart, beautiful smile, and a

fervent hug. Leona enjoyed visiting her kids, grandkids, siblings and extended family in all directions. Family meant everything to her, and she revered it above all else. Her abundant love, hard work, passion for life, and her faith will forever be ingrained in the hearts of her children, her children's children, and future generations to come. The Lord walked beside her through this life, trying to keep up. Leona spoke of times she knew this to be true. She understood His love to be a source of strength and a guiding light to which she owed much gratitude. Her journey has now ended, and there is immense comfort in knowing she can now rest, tenderly, peacefully, in His arms.

Leona had many close friends and family and will remain very much alive in the memories of those who knew and loved her. She leaves to treasure her memory, her best friend, kindred spirit, caretaker and her greatest love (and an all around nice guy): Johnny Cobb. Four children: Kathleen (Darrell Johnson) Emry-Mefferd; Brett Mefferd; Chad (Elaine) Mefferd; Shawna Mefferd Kelty. Grandchildren: Melana (Gabe) Henery; Sarah Paxton; River Mefferd; Aelish Mefferd; Elorah Mefferd. Great Grandchildren: Garrett, Sabin, Henry, Soren, Hazel, and Jane. Siblings: Robert (Jennifer) Emry; Ruth (Bill) Micheel; Raleigh Emry; Tom (Lori) Emry.

She was preceded in death by her parents and sister-in-law, Terri Emry.

Memorials are suggested to the family for future designation. Condolences may be shared online at www.osrfh.com. Services are entrusted to O'Brien Straatmann Redinger Funeral and Cremation Services.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

NOV **20**. 11:00 AM (CT)

O'Brien Straatmann Redinger Funeral Homes and Cremations

4115 Ave N

Kearney, NE 68847

(308) 234-3500

info@osrfh.com

<https://www.osrfh.com>

Tribute Wall



“ *Leona J. Emry*

January 28, 2023 at 08:01 AM



“ *Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Leona J. Emry.*



November 19, 2021 at 01:25 PM



“ *Rex & Julie Micheel & family purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of Leona J. Emry.*



Rex & Julie Micheel & family - November 18, 2021 at 12:06 PM



“ *Jeffrey and Dana Lyn Henery purchased the Care and Compassion Spray for the family of Leona J. Emry.*



Jeffrey and Dana Lyn Henery - November 17, 2021 at 05:01 PM

KF

“ Kurt & Lindsey & Family purchased the Beautiful i
n Blue for the family of Leona J. Emry.



Kurt & Lindsey & Family - November 17, 2021 at 04:36 PM

TA

“ The Hood's - Kelley, Wade, Lexa & Angie
purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for
the family of Leona J. Emry.



The Hood's - Kelley, Wade, Lexa & Angie - November 17, 2021
at 12:38 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for
the family of Leona J. Emry.



November 16, 2021 at 10:19 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for
the family of Leona J. Emry.



November 16, 2021 at 07:47 PM



“ *Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Leona J. Emry.*



November 16, 2021 at 05:03 PM



“ *She was a beautiful woman and a beautiful soul with so much love to give. I will miss her.*

Janna - November 16, 2021 at 05:03 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Leona J. Emry.*



November 14, 2021 at 07:41 PM



“ *Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Leona J. Emry.*



November 14, 2021 at 09:26 AM