



## Judith S. Lilly

November 21, 1932 - December 1, 2019

Judith S. Lilly, age 87, of Amherst, passed away Sunday, December 1, 2019 at her home.

Please visit [www.hlmkfuneral.com](http://www.hlmkfuneral.com). to leave a tribute or message of condolence. Horner Lieske McBride & Kuhl Funeral and Cremation Services of Kearney is in charge of arrangements.

Judith Ann Schuh Lilly died on December 1, 2019, ten days after celebrating her 87th birthday. She was the center and the heart and soul of her family and while we know we will manage, we are all struggling to imagine exactly what that will look like.

Judy was born on November 21, 1932 in Jacksonville, Florida to an engineer father (Leon Schuh) and piano teacher mother (Geraldine Schuh). As an only child, she developed a love of books, languages and animals, particularly horses, early on in life—loves that she passed on to all of her children and grandchildren. She graduated from Florida State University in Tallahassee in 1954 where she majored in elementary education and German. It was there that she met and married Douglas Lilly to whom she was married for 63 years. She taught school briefly but then left work to raise their three children. For most of their marriage, Judy and Doug lived in Colorado (1964-1982) and Oklahoma (1983-2002) where Doug was a research scientist before they retired to live near their daughter Carol in Nebraska in 2002.

Judy and Doug traveled several times to her favorite country, Germany, and lived there for a year in 1956. She loved the people and the architecture, the

land, and the food and they made some life-long friends.

In Colorado, Judy developed her love for horses, and she raised and bred Arabian horses and directed a 4-H Club for horsemanship for over 10 years. She loved taking her children on adventurous (and sometimes terrifying) three-day horse pack trips through the Rocky Mountains during the summers they spent at their mountain home in Fraser. Judy worked continuously on her own riding skills and also gave riding lessons until a serious car accident in 1994 severely impeded her mobility, eventually resulting in the loss of one leg. But as long as she could, she continued to ride her faithful horse Shadow. Judy was a deeply spiritual person and she became and remained a member of the Christ Center, (formerly The Lotus Center) of Oklahoma City throughout the rest of her life. Her beliefs and the friends she made there were a source of great strength for her. At the Center she learned the power of positive thought through meditation, helping her to find meaning and purpose even under bleak circumstances. This combination helped her strengthen an already strong mind and added to her natural resilience. She had intense determination not to let any of her physical crises beat her.

Judy had an artist's sensibility which she applied to all aspects of her life. In Colorado she spent many years developing her talents as a photographer. After her accident, she spent more time in her garden and studio, taking wonderful photographs of flowers, landscapes and her grandchildren, painting birds and flowers, and teaching her grandchildren to paint clouds, and to distinguish weeds from wildflowers. In addition, she had a passion for gardening and creating beautiful landscapes on her own property. With 5 acres to work on, it was never a finished project. And she taught us all the value of the correct placement of a rock or a rose and to see and appreciate the natural beauty of the land. She was fiercely protective of her family, friends, pets, and even the wildlife on her property. Birds, squirrels, (and a few 'possums and raccoons) were fed generously and carefully, as well as any stray cat or dog needing a home.

Judy taught those around her the value of love, care, and beauty. The first

lesson she taught her children was that we must always care for our animals before ourselves, and the next, to complete all work well and properly. She had what often seemed like painfully high expectations, for herself and for others and she constantly inspired all of us to be better than we were. In caring for her husband in his last years facing the challenges of dementia, Judy was tirelessly patient and kind, even as her own health suffered. After Doug passed away she would say, "It was like I lost half of my spine, I don't know what to do, I have no purpose." Yet she carried on, taking care of the rest of her family, friends and animals. She often said how lucky she was and she gave generously to the causes and people she believed in. Even in the last month of her life, she spent hours agonizing over Christmas shopping, trying to find the perfect gift for everyone. This overwhelming love and care for her family and friends (Mary, Lynn, Reinhard, Iris, Nancy, Pegge and others) was her greatest gift and what we will miss the most.

Judy's last months were increasingly difficult as her illness progressed and she required 24 hour care. Her care-givers - Nancy Smolik, Iris Shields, Jessie Blair, Brandy Egge, and Hope Smith - were incredible and we thank them from the bottom of our hearts for their kindness, patience and competence. They made sure that no need of hers went un-met, from feeding the birds to pulling the weeds and administering medication and helping her into her wheelchair, they made her last days bearable for everyone.

Judy is survived by her three children (Kathy Dunbar, Don Lilly and Carol Lilly-Garvue), six grandchildren (Sabrina Thomas, Stephanie Dunbar, Daniela and Max Garvue, and Michael and Brianna Lilly), and one great grandson, Jeremiah Lilly.

Per her wishes, Judy and Doug's ashes will be scattered in the Colorado mountains. There are no other planned services. In lieu of flowers, please send donations to the ASPCA, the Scleroderma Foundation or the Christ Center in Oklahoma.

Cards and remembrances may be sent to Carol Lilly, 9770 175th Rd, Amherst,

NE 68812.

# Tribute Wall



“ *Judith S. Lilly*

---

January 29, 2023 at 11:14 AM



“ *Thank you, Judy for being in my life. We shared so many beautiful memories and brilliant insights. We were there for each other when we needed it and even in her last days, I could feel her hand in mine. She was an inspiration. When she was still in the hospital we talked and talked and talked, we reminisced about happy, wonderful times. She was so glad to be going home to be in her garden with all her 4 legged family. She so looked forward to being around for her birthday and Thanksgiving as she knew she'd be able to see family she adored. We were all blessed to know her! Thank you, again, Judy, my friend. Go with God and be free! God's loves and blessings to us all! Pegge and Billy Butenhoff*

---

**pegge butenhoff** - December 11, 2019 at 12:45 AM



“ *When Judy lived here in Oklahoma, I notice a lot of animals around her place, and when I asked how many she had, she said she had 7 cats, 7 dogs, and 7 horses. They were all happy and well cared for. I also remember a huge rock patio and rock pond THAT SHE BUILT HERSELF. I can't imagine how she moved some of the huge rocks, but where Judy was concerned, where there is a will, there is a way. I have awesome memories of such a lovey person.  
God Bless her family.  
Love, Linda Pulliam*

---

**Linda Pulliam** - December 10, 2019 at 07:59 PM

MA

“ *Mary lit a candle in memory of Judith S. Lilly*



---

**mary** - December 06, 2019 at 09:22 PM

KA

“ *To the Lilly Family,*

*Mrs. Lilly was an extraordinary woman of strength and compassion. She leaves a wonderful example of strength and perseverance and love of people, animals and nature.*

*Our deepest Sympathy to Kathy, Don and Carol and to all your family.*

*Sincerely,*

*Kathy Kanak & Jerry Straka*

---

**Kathy** - December 06, 2019 at 05:11 PM