



## Wanda Rose Friesen

May 14, 1933 - September 27, 2023

Wanda Rose (Bollinger) Friesen passed away on Sept 27, 2023 in San Luis Obispo, California at 90 years of age.

On May 14, 1933 she was born at her home on a farm in Whitley County near Tunker, Indiana where she was also raised. During her early years she participated in 4-H Club and music activities. She and her mother and sisters played an 8 hand piano piece (four people playing the piano at one time) in a contest at the state fair and received a 3rd place award.

Over her lifetime, she also enjoyed activities such as crafts, traveling, square dancing and writing articles, stories and poems that shared her Christian faith with others. Her faith in the Lord was important to her and she expressed this by being active in her church, teaching Sunday school, leading the choir and playing the piano. She also wrote her testimony of God's faithfulness in her life which she freely shared with others. She titled it, "Will our Faith Stand the Test?"

Wanda graduated from Washington Center High School in Whitley County, Indiana in 1951. She received a degree in Music Education from Manchester College in 1955. After graduation, she taught elementary music classes for several years in Goshen, Indiana.

She met her husband, Vernon Friesen, while both were on a mission trip to Mexico. During this trip, Wanda spent the summer at a work camp helping the Mexican people there. Wanda and Vernon were married a year later on August 25, 1957 in South Whitley, Indiana. After her marriage, she taught music in Round Lake, Illinois until moving with her husband to take classes at the University of Illinois. The family moved to Tucson, Arizona where their daughters, Amy (Ward) and Janell (Epp), were born. They then moved to McPherson, Kansas where their son, Jeffery Friesen, was born. They eventually moved to Manhattan, Kansas and settled there. After the birth of their children, Wanda spent many years as a homemaker and mother raising her children. As she had time, she did activities outside the home such as working at a nursing home, organizing a "Student Wives Club" at McPherson College and, as a member of the Toastmistress Club, winning a local speech contest and going to regionals.

After Wanda and Vernon divorced in the early 1980's, Wanda moved to San Luis Obispo, California where she would live, work and serve the community for the next 35+ years.

Some of Wanda's activities included being a docent at the historic Jack House and managing the QCOC clothing shop in Morro Bay. She also participated in numerous programs that supported the senior community including the Senior Companion Program, Senior Peer Counseling, and the Ombudsman and Hospice training programs. Wanda enjoyed square dancing, so she organized a square dance club for singles called the SoLO Squares. She was also a member of the Central Coast Clogging Club.

Wanda spent many hours volunteering, and over 20 years as coordinator of volunteers, for the information desks at the San Luis Obispo airport and train station. This volunteer program was sponsored by the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP). In a 2013 RSVP newsletter, it was said of Wanda,

"She is kind and caring to all travelers and volunteers alike and is often commended on her approach to life's little problems. She is a remarkable representative of the volunteer spirit that is alive and well in San Luis Obispo and RSVP. Her interest in helping those traveling through the San Luis Obispo airport and the Amtrak station is absolutely amazing."

As she aged, she still continued to think of others and share her Christian faith by sending cards, letters and her own personal poems written to give encouragement to family, friends and others who were going through hard times. Poem titles she shared most often included "On Wings of an Eagle", "Meet Me at the Cross", and "Does God Hear Me?"

Wanda is survived by her daughter Janell (Bryan) Epp, son Jeffery Friesen, son-in-law Eric Ward, 11 grandchildren and 7 great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her daughter Amy Ward, her parents Harry Bollinger, Sr and Joyce Reed Bollinger, brothers Harry Bollinger, Jr, and John Bollinger as well as her two sisters Mary Thomas and Alice Bohnstedt.

Celebration of Life is pending.