

CHARLENE GNAGY



Charlene Gnagy died on July 3, 2007. She was born on November 26, 1931 in Chico, where she attended public school and graduated as valedictorian of her high school class. She proceeded on to Decatur Baptist College followed by North Texas State University (now University of North Texas) where she earned a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education. In 1952 she accepted her first teaching job and moved to Midland, Texas.

Little did she know that in her second year as a teacher a future First Lady of our nation, Laura Welch Bush, would pass through her classroom doors, and that the two would remain in touch for the next 54 years. That same year, the young Miss Buckingham also went on a blind date and met a special guy. Three months later she married the love of her life, Larry Gnagy, on August 29, 1953. They were blessed with 52 wonderful years together.

Mrs. Gnagy remained in Midland throughout her teaching career of 34 years. She taught in several different public elementary schools as well as 12 years at the Child Development Center at First Baptist Church, Midland. Membership in professional teaching organizations such as Kappa Kappa Iota and Delta Kappa Gamma also kept her busy, along with her active personal life as a devoted wife, loving mother of two and active member of the First Baptist Church.

Charlene's fondest memories in the classroom included teaching children to read and receiving and returning the hugs of affection from her students. She lovingly encouraged her students' progress and maintained an interest in their later successes. Charlene was a gifted teacher of young children who inspired many. She is fondly remembered by Laura Bush as the teacher who sparked the interest in her to become an educator.

After retirement, Charlene traveled extensively with her husband to exciting destinations such as Italy, Germany, The Holy Lands, Canada and all across the U.S. In their later years, a credit to their relationship was taking care of each other.

Charlene is survived by a daughter Lynn James and her husband, Darryl of Midland, Texas, and a son, Bob Gnagy and his wife Tracy, of Sugar Land, Texas. She is also survived by four grandchildren, Becky and Tim James and Michael and Alayna Gnagy, and her brother, Jerry Buckingham of Chico, Texas. Through marriage by Lynn James, Charlene is also survived by a step-granddaughter, Tiffany Marker and three great-step-grandchildren, Eddie, Tommy and Ross.

She is preceded in death by her parents, Curtis and Ruth Buckingham of Chico, Texas, and a sister, Virginia Barnes of Bridgeport, Texas.

Funeral service was July 7 at First Baptist Church of Midland with Dr. Gary Dyer and Reverend Bob Hopkins officiating. Interment was at Resthaven Memorial Park. Pallbearers were Mark Ashley, Connor Dotson, Kirk Edwards, Michael Gnagy, Tim James, Hoyle McCright, Dr. Truman Spires, Paul Weissling, and Bill Zeitler. To place on-line condolences visit www.mem.com. Memorials may be directed to the First Baptist Church Building Fund, 2104 W. Louisiana, Midland, Texas, 79701 or to Centers for Children and Families, 1004 N. Big Spring, Suite 325, Midland, Texas, 79701.

*Ellis Funeral Home
801 Andrews Hwy. • Midland, Texas*

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